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ABSTRACT

Australia's tertiary institutions and licensing authorities that control the right to work in various trades and professions have largely ignored the need for procedures and processes to recognize formally the knowledge that people gain in their life experiences. For this reason, the issue of assessing adult learners' life experiences for the purpose of granting them exemptions from various course work was studied and a model for conducting such assessments was developed. Persons seeking certification submit portfolios and participate in assessment interviews. A panel of experts in the field in which exemption is being sought assesses candidates' portfolios and conducts a structured interview to assess their performance. The portfolio assessment involves checking the relevance of the competencies claimed against the outcomes of the courses from which exemption is being sought and classifying the work presented against rating scales. Candidates having satisfactory interviews and portfolios are first granted provisional exemption. Final ratification of the exemption is after a provisional period during which candidates undergo on-the-job assessment. (This report includes extracts from the portfolio of a woman seeking exemption from course work in child care, syllabus information about the courses from which she is seeking exemption, and a bibliography.) (MN)

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THE SCHOOL OF HARD KNOCKS

A study on the assessment of experiential learning

Peter Thomson

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THE SCHOOL OF HARD KNOCKS

A STUDY ON THE ASSESSMENT OF EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

PETER THOMSON

TAFE NATIONAL CENTRE FOR RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

Adelaide 1988

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PREFACE

THE SCHOOL OF HARD KNOCKS investigates a much neglected aspect of Australian education and training — the granting of credit for past experience. In carrying out the project I was continually being encouraged by the widespread interest in the idea of giving such credit. It seemed everybody had their own story to tell about how they, or people they knew, were disadvantaged by the absurdities of an education system which fails to take account of experience.

Many of the issues that are raised concern equity for such people as unemployed or retrenched workers seeking retraining, and women returning to paid employment. The existing policies in education and training which exclude a consideration of learning that has resulted from past experience are denying equity to these groups.

A major stumbling block to the granting of recognition has been the claim that experience cannot be assessed in a reliable and valid way. This report challenges that claim and proposes a method by which experience can be assessed.

There are, in fact, two reports in one. Those with a working knowledge of experiential learning can go straight to the Case Study to see how the assessment process might work in practice. Others with a more basic interest can read the document, without necessarily reading the Case Study, to gain an understanding of the issues involved.

There are many parties who would be affected by a move towards greater recognition of experience. Therefore it needs to be appreciated that changes in this direction will require considerable co-operation across a broad front — something that is not easily achieved in education and training circles. On the brighter side, there are already some stirrings of interest in various quarters. Hopefully the report will help to keep the issue on the agenda of our decision makers.

PETER THOMSON
Adelaide
February, 1988.

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I must thank also those Staff at Head Office in S.A. TAFE who facilitated my access to the colleges and gave me an overview of the Child Care teaching, assessment and accreditation procedures. In particular, I appreciated the help of Neil Strong and Liz Casha who were responsible for making my passage through the intricate network a smooth one.

Giulia Reveruzzi deserves special thanks for not only did she type sections of the earlier drafts of the document, but also provided the handwriting for Barbara X in the appropriate parts of the case study.

The portfolio section of the case study also benefited from the inclusion of an actual book review assignment of Amanda Cawthorne, who is currently doing the Child Care course in South Australia.

Penelope Curtin gave the editorial advice which enabled me to get the message across with more grace than I could otherwise have managed and Lorraine Hobart was responsible for typing the final form and deserves the credit for the format and appearance.

THE SCHOOL OF HARD KNOCKS
A study on the assessment of experiential learning

PETER THOMSON

INTRODUCTION

Australia's tertiary institutions and licensing authorities which control the right to work in various trades and professions have largely ignored the need for procedures and processes which give formal recognition of a person's previous experience in life.

This is particularly remarkable in times like the present when urgent calls for the upgrading of the skills of our workforce are accompanied by calls for cut backs in education spending. The recognition of prior experience is one of the few innovations that can simultaneously answer such diverse calls.

Imagine for a moment an individual who left school at 15, but who has successfully run a small business, say a delicatessen, for some years. This person decides to enrol in a TAFE Business Studies Certificate Course. The course takes two years full-time, but if exemptions were available for units like elementary bookkeeping, accounting, business practice etc., it would be possible to complete it in one year. Assuming that, in this case, the person did have the skills which justified the equivalent of one year's exemption, we can consider the benefits that result.

Firstly, the cost of training has been more or less halved and an individual, now possessing higher level skills, is available for work which makes use of these skills in one year rather than two. Furthermore, these advantages are accompanied by considerable personal benefits for the individual involved. There are, in addition, other less quantifiable factors. For instance, we could suggest that without the availability of the exemptions the person might have felt that two years of study was too long and required too big a financial commitment and decided not to enrol for the course in the first place. On the other hand it could be suggested that once the first success was achieved in the form of a Certificate there could be motivation to go on to further study and consequently higher levels of skill.

This report looks at the reasons Australia has been so reluctant to give credit for previous experience, and recommends the adoption of procedures that should be implemented to change the present situation. The report draws heavily upon a case study of a particular area of TAFE education and training — Child Care.

Although the recommendations have been framed around the policies and procedures which exist in the area of Child Care, it is believed that they are relevant to virtually all areas of TAFE and higher education.

DEFINITIONS

The saying 'Experience is the best teacher' provides the framework for what follows. Our interest is in the learning which comes from living and working - part of the process we call 'experience'.

The technical term to describe the outcomes of this process is EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING which is defined as:

> the attributes of knowledge, skill and attitude
> which are acquired through life and work experience.

This, however, is a broad definition and for the purposes of this report it is necessary to specify the two main types of experiential learning. The first is non-sponsored learning, that is learning acquired informally and independent of a training or educational institution. This is also known as 'learning through life experience', or more colloquially, 'learning from the school of hard knocks'.

The second broad category is sponsored learning. This is learning formally incorporated into institutional programs designed to give students more direct experience in integrating and applying knowledge. Examples are practical work or work experience done as part of a course.

Essentially this means that experiential learning can be split according to whether it is acquired informally or formally. For example, it is possible to learn about the hardness of different materials quite informally and to discover, through experience, that marble is scratched by quartz. On the other hand, the same learning is a formal part of practical science classes directed at teaching Mohs' scale of hardness.

This paper, however, is chiefly devoted to the informal type of experiential learning. In particular, how it can be assessed with a view to providing credit towards a recognised qualification. This is not to say that we entirely neglect the formal or sponsored learning component of experiential learning. Indeed, it is important to acknowledge at this point that we cannot always be sure how a particular thing has been learnt. It seems likely that much learning has been acquired through a combination of informal and formal experience.

Although it is not drawn out as a major issue in this report, it is generally implied that the experience referred to is in some way related to age. Individuals with the types of experiences that we will be looking at tend to be adults, and therefore the learning associated with experience is largely, though not exclusively, the province of adults.

At the risk of confusing the issue with more definitions, it must also be pointed out that the experiential learning we are interested in is the type which provides credit or exemption within a tertiary course. We are not much interested in experiential learning that can only be used for entry into a tertiary course. In Australia it is now fairly commonplace for tertiary institutions to set aside a small number of places for 'mature-aged entrants'. There are a variety of these schemes in existence, but none, to the author's knowledge, involves the assessment of the applicants' experiential learning. Mature-age selection is usually based on such things as entrance tests (which assess 'general ability'), essay assignments ('Why I Want to Return to Study') and interviews. Of course, selection issues cannot be entirely ignored in a report of this nature because, although the sort of people we are considering in the study seek exemptions, they must first get over the selection hurdle.

Indeed, it should be conceded that some people see gaining selection into courses as being of major importance to the whole debate on the assessment of experiential learning. But to explore selection-related problems in any depth would take the emphasis of this report away from what is intended. Instead the reader is asked to think in terms of 'open access'. To gain selection into an open access course the only thing needed is a completed application form. It is relatively easy to develop the argument that aspiring adult learners who have been suitably counselled should gain unrestricted entry to courses of their choice, but this is not the major issue for consideration in this paper.

The people who are of interest to us are those for whom entry into the course is not in question. The only question to be answered is how much credit should be given for their experiential learning.

In summary therefore, the type of experiential learning on which we will be focussing:

- has been acquired informally through life and work experience and is not something gained from an institutional program of education or training;
- is being assessed for the purpose of gaining exemption from part of a course not simply to gain entry into that course; and
- is more typically associated with adults than young people.

WHAT DO OTHER COUNTRIES DO ABOUT CREDITING EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING?

A number of European countries give systematic consideration to completed vocational training and years of work experience when admitting students to higher education institutions.[1] In some countries (e.g. Denmark and Sweden) work experience can be substituted for the normal school leaving certificate by applicants for higher education places.[2] In essence, the procedures adopted remove the need to possess a secondary education qualification to gain entry into a tertiary education institution. As such they are similar to the Australian 'mature-age entrants' schemes referred to earlier.

The awarding of exemption from the tertiary education requirements themselves is another matter. So far most of the consideration of experiential learning at the tertiary level seems to have been associated with the provision of guidance and counselling to those interested in further study or, in some cases, providing entry to an access or foundation course, preparatory to beginning a tertiary education program. This has certainly been the case in the United Kingdom, although some examples of providing credit for advanced academic or professional standing are now being put into practice.[3]

A stark contrast to the situation in the European countries is provided by the United States. Here the considerable volume of work on providing credits for experiential learning has been dominated by the efforts of the Co-operative Assessment of Experiential Learning (CAEL) program.[4] By 1981 CAEL had some 350 associated institutions, had provided 30,000 training days for faculty staff between 1977 and 1980, and was a widely-used consultant group to government and state bodies. From its commencement, CAEL has produced a series of reports which give the collaborating institutions the kinds of information and stimulus for working out procedures best suited to their own circumstances.[5]

As the assessment of experiential learning is a relatively complex task, most US colleges participating in CAEL have established units to co-ordinate the process. The vast majority of assessments are based on 'portfolios'. The portfolio is an accumulation of information about a student's experiences and achievements organised into a manageable form for assessment. Portfolios generally contain:

- a résumé of the student's educational, employment and community experiences;
- an autobiographical narrative containing the student's claims as to what he or she has learnt from the experiences;
- a statement requesting credit in specific units or subjects;

- a set of documents such as job descriptions and letters from employers, providing evidence that learning experiences did indeed take place; and

- work samples.

The point to note is that the portfolio includes both sponsored and non-sponsored experiential learning although, for the majority of individuals, the emphasis would be on non-sponsored or informal learning.

WHAT DOES AUSTRALIA DO ABOUT CREDITING EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING?

A review of current practices in Australia regarding the provision of credit or exemption for experiential learning has revealed that a wide range of interested parties are involved.[6] These include federal and state government departments, committees (involving government, employer and union representatives) operating at both federal and state levels, statutory authorities, industrial training commissions and licensing boards, and finally TAFE and institutes for higher education.

A large number of trades and professions have mechanisms for granting credit, but only if the credit is being sought for formal training, that is, training provided as part of an institutional program. There have been very few attempts to take account of informal experiential learning.[7] This situation persists even though commentators continue to reflect upon the pool of talent that lies, unrecognised in any formal sense, in our workforce.[8] By implementing procedures which facilitated the recognition of this talent we could anticipate a workforce much more enthusiastic about meeting new challenges and overcoming the so-called 'skills gap' between tradesperson and technician or between technician and professional.

Despite a general recognition of the good sense that underlies the idea, the crediting of informal or non-sponsored experiential learning is very much in its infancy in this country. Where work experience is specified as being worthy of receiving credit, it is usually the sponsored variety, that is, experience formally recognised as a part of a training curriculum. Examples of credit towards a business studies course being given to, say, somebody like the successful delicatessen owner encountered in the INTRODUCTION, are few and far between.

HOW DOES ACADEMIC LEARNING DIFFER FROM EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING?

Academic Learning

Most of us are familiar with academic learning because this is the form of learning we were exposed to for the majority of our school years. An example of how the process of academic learning leads to the learning of a principle is summarised in the following four steps[9]:

The individual receives information about a general principle via lectures, books, etc. in a symbolic form (words) which is then committed to memory.

The information is assimilated and organised so the general principle is understood.

An inference about how the general principle could be applied is made.

The general principle is applied to a particular situation.

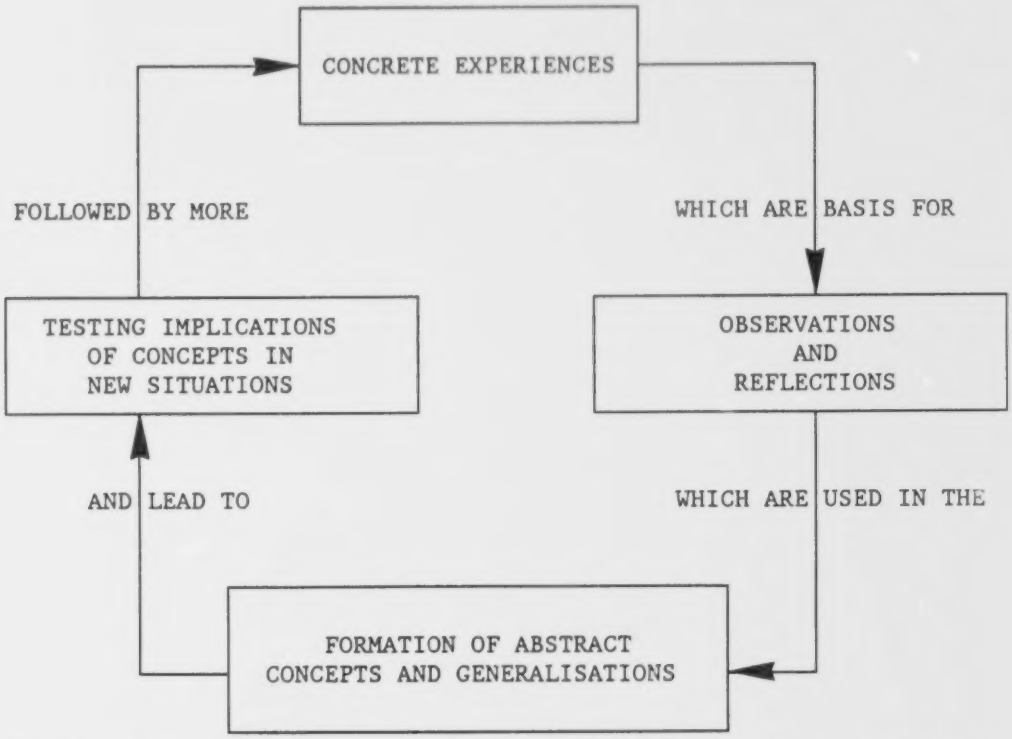
Once the individual has applied the principle the information initially received has become useful. Academic learning has a number of characteristics, for example it:

- enormously reduces learning time (through the use of words rather than experience);
- requires a relatively high level of verbal skills;
- does not always make the link with concrete application;
- depends on artificial motivation (e.g. marks in a test); and
- is relatively easy to forget.

Experiential Learning

Experiential learning differs greatly from the academic learning experienced in the traditional classroom. It can be seen as almost the reverse of the academic learning process. In its most fundamental form it does not use a symbolic medium such as words (as in the reading of text books) but instead relies primarily on concrete experience, observation and reflection. The learning can therefore be time-consuming as the experiences, observations and reflections must be repeated often enough to allow the development of concepts and generalisations which can be tested in new situations. However, once the process is completed, what is learnt by this method is not easily forgotten.

One useful tool for understanding the complex process of experiential learning is the Kolb and Fry concept of the experiential learning cycle.[10] They suggest that learning takes place in a continually cyclical movement as shown below.


CONCRETE EXPERIENCES
FOLLOWED BY MORE
WHICH ARE BASIS FOR
TESTING IMPLICATIONS OF CONCEPTS IN NEW SITUATIONS
OBSERVATIONS AND REFLECTIONS
AND LEAD TO
WHICH ARE USED IN THE
FORMATION OF ABSTRACT CONCEPTS AND GENERALISATIONS

The fact that experiential learning does not necessarily require the use of spoken or written words means that a person may learn something via this process without being able to verbalize it. This presents a problem for an assessor and underlines the need to provide assistance to people wishing to present evidence about what they have learnt. It is a characteristic of experiential learning that many

people do not fully appreciate how much they have learnt. This is particularly true of people unfamiliar with the workings of the academic system.

BARRIERS TO THE RECOGNITION OF EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

It was claimed above that the provision of credit for experiential learning is widely recognised as a good idea. While this might be generally true, the enthusiasm for the idea is not universal. There is evidence that traditional academics are more than a little uneasy about giving credit for learning that takes place outside their classrooms.[11] Part of this response from the traditionalists is no doubt associated with an adverse reaction they have towards change. And change there must be if it is decided to establish procedures for crediting experiential learning! The amount of new or additional work that must accompany such changes no doubt puts many academics offside. However there is also the foreign nature of the whole idea of learning in such a different way. Instead of learning from instruction in a classroom, experiential learning occurs through experiencing or observing the consequences of an action. A very real concern of the traditionalists is that by recognising experience they will change the nature of the qualification they deliver — whether it be a Certificate in Business Studies or a Bachelor of Arts degree. The fact is they probably will, but this poses a new and challenging question — 'Is such a change not a good thing?'

Most of the arguments about the pros and cons of recognising experiential learning centre around the issue of assessment. The biggest barrier to the recognition of experiential learning is that erected by critics who say experiential learning cannot be assessed in a valid or reliable way.

The temptation is to hoist such critics with their own petard and point to the lack of validity and reliability of the assessment procedures presently in place in the academic classroom.[12] Unfortunately, such a tactic would not make the initial problem go away. The advocates of experiential leaning understand that the assessment question is the most difficult one for them to answer. Furthermore, they would concede that recognising and giving credit for experiential learning cannot be separated from the need to have acceptable methods of assessment in place.

THE ASSESSMENT OF EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

Before moving to look at a practical way in which the assessment of experiential learning can be carried out, it is important to consider the theoretical framework in which the assessment process operates. The reader is reminded that the following sections are written with the adult learner in mind and they consider both sponsored and non-sponsored experiential learning, but it is the non-sponsored, informal learning that does not involve any organised program which receives most attention.

The principles underlying the assessment process apply irrespective of the type of learning involved. Any process of assessment of experiential learning which involves the granting of exemption from course work must be educationally credible. The basic requirements of an acceptable exemption granting process are that:

- the course from which exemptions are being sought has a set of specified performance objectives which incorporate standards (that is, statements about what those people who have successfully completed the course can do and how well they can do it);

- the experiential learning possessed by the applicant who is seeking exemption is relevant to the outcomes of the course; and

- the assessment of the applicant's experiential learning is carried out by individuals who are recognised as competent and are able to give due regard to the maintenance of honesty and security.

These conditions will now be considered in greater detail.

Performance Objectives

The process of crediting experiential learning can only work when the intended outcomes of the courses for which credit is being sought are set down in reasonable detail. Without knowing what the course aims to achieve, it is not possible to determine what relevance any prior learning might have for the purposes of receiving credit. The credit granting process therefore tends to work best where the course is described in terms of performances or competencies to be achieved.

Standards

One of the great sadnesses about making assessments is that we know they always have an element of unfairness about them. When we rank students using norm-referenced tests we know that the ranking is prone to error and that some students deserve to be in other positions on the rank order. Similarly, when we use criterion-referenced tests, the subjective human judgment which necessarily enters at some stage in the process, ensures that mistakes are made. We know that some students who deserve to pass will, in fact, fail and vice versa.[13]

All those involved in the setting of performance standards must recognise the inevitability of this injustice and work to keep the numbers affected as small as possible. This can be done by giving due regard to those issues related to the technical adequacy and practicability of the assessment methods. One example of ensuring

technical adequacy is to verify that all the requirements for assessment have been disclosed to the students. An example of a practicality requirement would be for the methods of assessment to be easily explainable to interested outside parties.[14]

Relevance

Most mature adults who are interested in entering or re-entering higher education possess a formidable array of knowledge, skills and attitudes which have been obtained through experiential learning. This learning, however, counts for nothing if it is not relevant to the performance objectives of the course in which they wish to gain credits. There must be a relationship between the learning for which credit is sought and the content of the course.

Those Who Make the Assessments

The individuals who decide the question of exemptions have the major responsibility for guaranteeing the integrity of the process. They, in turn, need the assistance of a set of clear and unambiguous procedures as well as instruments with sound validity.

Given the lack of experience in making judgments about experiential learning in Australia, all individuals involved need to be subjected to a suitable selection and training program. Such a program would include:

- specification of the qualities the assessors need to possess (for example, experience outside education would usually be mandatory);
- defining (preferably through the use of exemplars) competent, incompetent and borderline performance in the relevant knowledge, skills and attitudes; and
- making assessments in a trial situation to check their validity and reliability.

We shall now look at how all this might work in practice for an applicant seeking exemption from part of an existing course — the Advanced Certificate in Child Care.

A CASE STUDY IN ASSESSING EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING FOR A CERTIFICATE COURSE IN CHILD CARE

The arguments associated with the assessment of experiential learning have so far been produced in the absence of any concrete examples of how the process might work in practice. This is partly because there is no Australian example of assessing the type of learning at which this report is directed. Thus it has been necessary to create a hypothetical situation to demonstrate how experiential learning can be assessed.

The Child Care course considered below actually exists, but the applicant, Barbara X, does not. Barbara has been invented and the assessment procedures applied to her have been specially developed to demonstrate how to deal with such a person.

The Course

The course under study is the South Australian Advanced Certificate in Child Care which is a TAFE course aimed at producing graduates who can be employed as child care workers with children from birth to six years in a variety of children's services settings.[15] Graduates are required to maintain high standards of professionalism in the care of the children in their charge accepting, in turn, the responsibilities this entails to the children, their parents and the centre in which they are employed.

The duration of the course is 1530 hours taken over two years of full-time study or approximately 4 to 5 years when undertaken part-time. However, because of the flexibility which has been built into the course through the use of competency-based assessment methods, the time required to complete the program can be considerably reduced, and an accelerated study program can be undertaken by individual students. A student with demonstrated abilities and competencies in a particular area may be granted exemption for all or part of a module, only undertaking those sections which it is perceived are necessary to bring them up to an acceptable overall competency level. Students may be granted exemptions from up to 50% of the total course on the basis of their previous studies. (In the hypothetical case which follows exemptions of this magnitude have been considered mainly on the basis of informal experiential learning; a possibility which is not yet available in the actual course).

Most importantly the course is expressed in 'terminal objectives'. This means that a series of statements describes what the student should be able to do on completion of each subject, e.g. 'Should be able to describe the more common childhood illnesses in children from birth to six years'. There are also procedures set down for establishing standards for the terminal objectives. Taken together, this comes close to the requirement for 'performance objectives' which was earlier specified as a basic prerequisite for crediting experiential learning.

The Applicant

Barbara X is a 40 year old mother of two; Troy who is 14 and Samantha who is a year younger. Barbara left school after completing Year 10 and worked as a shop assistant before marrying and becoming a full-time mother. Now that her children are growing up she has returned to the paid workforce.

Barbara is very active in the local community. As well as her job at the newsagent, she works as a volunteer at a play group set up by the staff and parents of the school attended by Samantha. She also has craft skills which she has combined with her interest in the theatre. She does the make-up for the local theatrical society and also works as a dresser when required.

She is an unpaid (and at times unwilling) assistant to her husband Arch in his quest for higher qualifications with the St. Johns Ambulance Service. Over the years she has learnt first aid skills along with Arch, although she has never taken any of the examinations.

Barbara works hard at being a competent mother, and has read widely on the subject of child rearing, partly because of difficulties which she had with Troy who was 'hyperactive'. She also has a way with children, something that became apparent to everybody at the play group where she was a volunteer. When Barbara expressed a desire to do something different from her shop assistant work it was suggested to her that she should make use of her talents in dealing with children and become a child care worker.

Barbara has decided to apply for a place in the child care course, but rather than taking two years to complete the certificate she is applying for exemption from 50% of the course work so that she can gain her certificate in a single year. In what follows a set of procedures have been developed to consider Barbara's case.

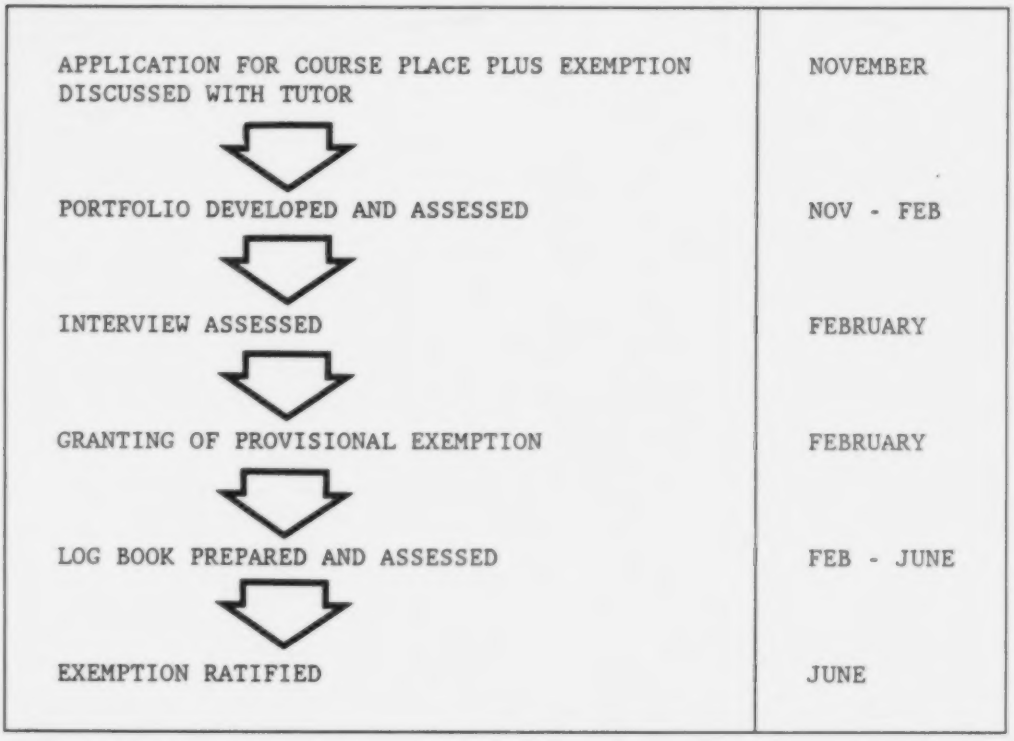
Obtaining Exemption

The process of obtaining exemption is of necessity, a relatively lengthy one, and the period between application and ratification of the request for credit is approximately eight months[16]. However about half that period is spent in on-the-job training and

assessment, so the period between application and the commencement of training is only three to four months. Applicants seeking exemption for experiential learning spend the majority of the time before they start training in preparing their portfolios.

Obtaining exemption involves a preliminary step in which provisional exemption is granted by an assessment panel which bases its decision both on information presented in the portfolio and an interview. Training then commences in February in a child care centre for a period of four to five months during which time the student is expected to demonstrate most of the competencies for which exemption has been granted. The demonstrated competencies are recorded in a log book which is assessed by a panel set up to decide whether or not the exemptions from study should be ratified.

The steps in the process are shown below.



Planning Meetings with Course Tutor

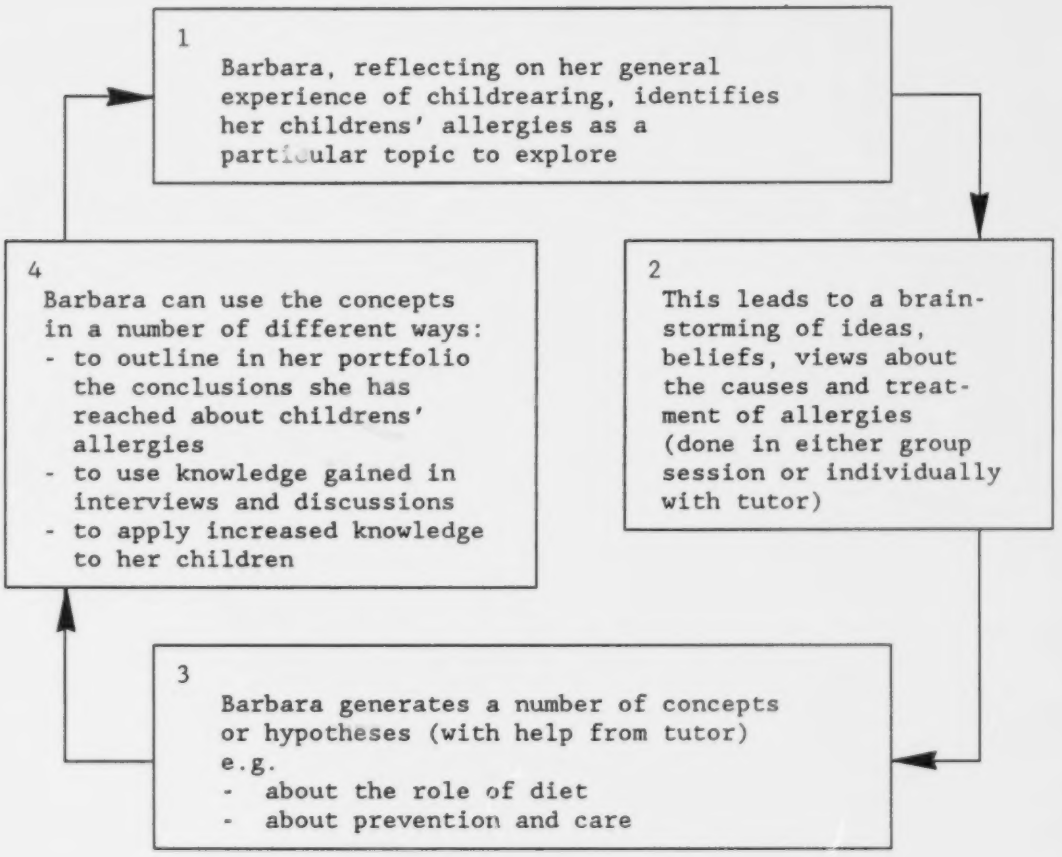
Applications are processed by individuals designated as course tutors. Tutors have an important role in the process as they must meet with each applicant individually and provide guidance on:

- how much exemption can reasonably be claimed; and
- how to develop a portfolio to support the claimed exemption.

Tutors therefore need to be familiar with both the demands of the course and the day-to-day requirements of the job itself.

In cases like Barbara's, the tutor has the additional task of helping her to discover just how much she has learnt is relevant to the course. What the tutor does is to introduce Barbara to the experiential learning cycle we considered on page 7. How this works in practice is shown below.

HOW EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING CYCLE WORKS FOR BARBARA


1
Barbara, reflecting on her general experience of childrearing, identifies her childrens' allergies as a particular topic to explore
2
This leads to a brain-storming of ideas, beliefs, views about the causes and treat-ment of allergies (done in either group session or individually with tutor)
3
Barbara generates a number of concepts or hypotheses (with help from tutor) e.g.
- about the role of diet
- about prevention and care
4
Barbara can use the concepts in a number of different ways:
- to outline in her portfolio the conclusions she has reached about childrens' allergies
- to use knowledge gained in interviews and discussions
- to apply increased knowledge to her children

This process may be repeated many times with the tutor prompting Barbara to reflect on a wide range of topics which have relevance to child care.

Barbara and her tutor have discussed her previous experiences, and together they have been through the lists of terminal objectives that have been set for the different subjects of the course,[17] as well as discussing the day-to-day requirements of the job. The tutor's judgment is based on a matching of the information about Barbara's knowledge, skills and attitudes obtained in the tutorials with knowledge of the real demands of the course and job. Full details of the modules and part modules that Barbara and her tutor have decided to claim exemption for are provided in the Appendix. The request is for 96 credit points out of a possible total of 191.

The Portfolio

Barbara knows that a portfolio detailing what she has learnt from her life and work experiences is a cornerstone of the exemption process. She has read the guidelines on how to prepare a portfolio in the booklet given her by the tutor 'How to Obtain Credit for Past Experience: Student Guidelines'[18].

The initial agreement on how much exemption to claim is based on relatively little hard evidence because Barbara's portfolio development has only just begun. The tutor makes it clear to Barbara how she will need to substantiate her claims to 50% exemption. In Barbara's case the tutor decides to set a number of assignments as part of the portfolio and Barbara is informed what standards are to be met in doing these. To assist in this process the tutor provides her with some portfolio material produced by other mature-aged students who had gained exemptions in previous years — this enables her to appreciate the standards required.

It is possible to view the portfolio development as a contract between Barbara and her tutor, the contract being a guarantee of a certain amount of credit in return for a portfolio which covers a specified content at a sufficiently high standard.

Once the tutor and Barbara have agreed on the contents of the portfolio, the agreement is set down formally in writing and Barbara is therefore assured of a place on the course. The tutor provides a statement on how well Barbara has performed in the 3 month period up to February and this is included in her portfolio. However, whether or not she gets the full 50% exemption she is asking for, will not be decided until her experience has been assessed.

Extracts from Barbara X's portfolio follow.

EXTRACTS FROM THE PORTFOLIO OF BARBARA X

The following extracts are provided to show the reader the sort of information that is typically provided in a portfolio.
This is the type of information that the people making an assessment of Barbara's case for exemption would have at their disposal.

CONTENTS

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Biographical data	3
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Example of newsletter designed and written for playgroup parents	20
Autobiography	*
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Statement outlining experience of other cultures	*

+ Only one sample is included in the extract

* Not provided in extract.

BIOGRAPHICAL DATA

CHILD CARE

DIRECTIONS FOR COMPLETING THIS FORM

On this form you are asked to provide some information about yourself.

- The first section consists of simple facts such as your name, address and age.
- In the next section you are asked to supply information about aspects of your health and physical condition which are important in the occupation you wish to enter as well as information about your interests or hobbies.

To make your task easier the form contains a number of questions where all you need to do is tick ☑ a box.

Make sure the information you provide is as accurate as possible. It may be necessary for those who are making decisions about the applicants to check some of the details you have provided.

Section 1 (please type or print)

1.1 NAME: X (Surname) Barbara (First name)

1.2 ADDRESS: 296 Payneham Road

Payneham SA POSTCODE: 5070

1.3 TELEPHONE NO: 42 7905

1.4 SEX: Male ☐ Female ☑ (Please tick correct box)

1.5 AGE: 40 years DATE OF BIRTH: 4 / 7 / 1947 Day/ Month/ Year

1.6 EMPLOYMENT:

Have you had any full-time or part-time jobs or taken part in any work experience programs over the last 5 years?

NO ☐ (if NO, go to 2.1)

YES ☑ (if YES, please give details below)

EMPLOYMENT OVER LAST 5 YEARS (Give details of the last job you held on the first line then work backwards)			
EMPLOYERS NAME AND ADDRESS (e.g. Macdonalds, Bridge Rd, Richmond)	TYPE OF WORK (cleaner, typist, stacker etc.)	HOURS OF WORK (e.g. full-time, 1 day/ week etc.)	PERIOD EMPLOYED from (date) to (date)
Marden Newsagent Marden Shopping Centre Payneham Road Payneham Phone No. 423701	Shop Assistant	2½ days a week	May 1983 present
Curl up and dye (Payneham Hairdressers) O'G Road Phone No. 424242	Receptionist	Full-time	1982 May 1983
Phone No.			
Phone No.			
Phone No.			

MARDEN PLAYGROUP
C/- Marden Primary School
23 Gull Road
MARDEN SA 5070

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Barbara X has informed me of her desire to train as a child care worker. I am very pleased to be able to write this testimonial of her service to the Marden Playgroup as this is clearly of relevance to Barbara's aspirations.

The Marden Playgroup is the brainchild of a small but dynamic group of individuals who are associated in some way with the Marden Primary School Community. When the Playgroup was set up two years ago we called for volunteers to assist me (as the trained Playgroup Director) in the running of the operation.

Barbara was one of the first volunteers and she has been working with us for two days a week since we began.

Although she has not had the benefit of training, Barbara has displayed a deep understanding of the needs of the children. Since we started, our playgroup clients have ranged in age from 2 1/2 months to 5 years and it is noteworthy that Barbara has been able to work with all ages with consummate ease.

She brought with her skills that have greatly enhanced the quality of experience we give our young ones. Outstanding amongst these have been her talents in sewing and make-up. She seems to be forever creating new furnishings for the playroom and the older children just love the days when she brings along her make-up kit and paints their faces.

Barbara will be sadly missed if she leaves the playgroup. She works very hard at everything she does and I find I am increasingly coming to rely upon her for fresh ideas for enriching the lives of our charges. I have watched her steadily gain in confidence over the last two years. An example of this was her initiative in starting the Playgroup Newsletter which was something she thought of and now produces almost entirely by herself.

I cannot recommend her to you too strongly.

Yours faithfully,

Rebecca Curtain

R. CURTAIN (A.Dip. Std)
Director

1.7 EDUCATION - PRIMARY AND SECONDARY:

Which of the following is your level of primary and secondary education?

Completed primary school only ☐

Completed Year 10 (Intermediate) only ☑

Completed Year 11 only ☐

Completed Year 12 ☐

1.8 OTHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING:

Please give details about any of the following qualifications you have obtained.

Apprenticeship certificate ☐

specify trade _____

Other vocational certificate ☐

specify trade _____

Diploma, Degree ☐

specify _____

Other training, specify _____ ☐

_____

NOTE: PHOTOCOPIES OF MOST RECENT SCHOOL REPORTS, ALONG WITH ANY CERTIFICATES FROM YEAR 12, APPRENTICESHIPS, DEGREES ETC. SHOULD BE ATTACHED TO THIS SECTION OF THE PORTFOLIO.

Section 2

Before completing this section it is important to have read the introductory information 'SO YOU WANT TO BE A CHILD CARE WORKER' which explains some of the problems child care workers can have.

2.1 Do you know of any physical condition that might be a problem if you were to work in child care?

NO [✓] (if No, go to 2.2)

YES [ ] (if YES, please give details below)

2.2 What are your hobbies and interests? (Tick the ones that apply to you.)

collecting things	[ ]	painting, drawing	[ ]
photography	[ ]	acting	[ ]
knitting, sewing	[✓]	carpentry, woodwork	[ ]
making models	[ ]	sport	[ ]
listening to music	[ ]	other (please specify)	[✓]
playing musical instrument	[ ]	theatre makeup	
watching films	[ ]		
watching plays, ballet	[✓]		

2.3 Do any of your hobbies or interests involve belonging to a team, club or society?

NO ☐ (if NO, go to 2.5)

YES ☑ (if YES, please give name of team, club or society)

Payneham Theatrical Society

2.4 Are you, or have you ever been, an official in any team, club or society?

NO ☑ (if NO, go to 2.5)

YES ☐ (if YES, please give the position plus name of team, club or society)

2.5 Have you ever worked (whether paid or unpaid) in the area of child care?

NO ☐

YES ☑ (if YES, please give details)

I have worked for the last two years as an assistant in the Marden Playgroup. This playgroup was set up by the staff and parents of Marden Primary School. I work (unpaid) for two days a week 8.30am to 3.30pm

PERSONAL STATEMENT

This portfolio contains evidence about why I would like to become a child care worker, and what I think qualifies me to gain exemption from part of the course.

Although I left school with no qualifications, I have had a lot of experience of working with children since then. This has partly come about as a result of having two children of my own. One of my children is hyperactive and because of this I have had to become involved with a variety of organisations which provide support for such children.

Experiences with my own children had led me to read widely on the subject of child rearing, and particularly hyperactivity. My personal library on these subjects amounts to 12 books, and I have also read a number of others which I have borrowed from friends or from the local library. Also I have been involved in working with a local playgroup.

I enjoy various craft-based interests (sewing and make-up work for a theatre group). I have provided details of the things I have learnt from my prior experience in the Autobiography which is included in the portfolio. Finally I would like to say that I know I like to work with children. Although I have no exam qualifications, I think my years of experience qualify me for credit towards the certificate course.

Barbara X

COMPETENCIES COVERED IN THE PORTFOLIO

This form is to be completed after discussion with your tutor.

The five general objectives of the Advanced Certificate in Child Care are listed below. In the box alongside each objective you are to specify which of the contents of the portfolio demonstrates you have competences relevant to that objective.

OBJECTIVES (CAN DEMONSTRATE SPECIFIC COMPETENCIES AND SKILLS IN:)	SECTIONS OF PORTFOLIO WHICH RELATE TO THE COMPETENCY
1 *THE PRACTICAL DAY-TO-DAY CARE OF YOUNG CHILDREN.*	Testimonials + Autobiography *
2 *UNDERSTANDING, PLANNING AND PROVIDING FOR THE DEVELOPMENTAL NEEDS OF CHILDREN BIRTH TO SIX YEARS, INCLUDING THOSE WITH SPECIAL NEEDS, IN CHILD CARE SETTINGS.*	Testimonials + Statement from course Tutor Book Reviews Assignments * Autobiography *
3 *MEETING THE RANGE OF INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCES AND NEEDS OF YOUNG CHILDREN IN CHILD CARE, PARTICULARLY IN THE CONTEXT OF THEIR FAMILIES AND CULTURES.*	Testimonials + statement outlining experiences of other cultures * autobiography *
4 *PROVIDING A CHILD CARE ENVIRONMENT WHICH OFFERS A WIDE VARIETY OF APPROPRIATE DEVELOPMENTAL EXPERIENCES FOR YOUNG CHILDREN.*	Testimonials + Photographic record of 'a day in the life of the Marden Playgroup' *
5 *WORKING IN A PROFESSIONAL MANNER AS A TRAINED CHILD CARE WORKER, AND DEMONSTRATING APPROPRIATE PERSONAL QUALITIES, E.G. RESOURCEFULNESS, SENSITIVITY AND FLEXIBILITY.*	Testimonials + Samples of learning materials developed for playgroup *

+ Only one sample included in extract

* Not provided in extract.

STATEMENT FROM COURSE TUTOR

APPLICATION FROM BARBARA X FOR EXEMPTION

Barbara X has attended the tutorial sessions I have held over the last three months to assist her in the preparation of her portfolio.

I have worked with her in both individual and group sessions and we have teased out a great deal of evidence of her prior learning. She performed particularly well in the group sessions and when we were brainstorming her brain always seemed to be storming ahead of the rest.

Barbara has great interpersonal skills and is a natural comic. Prior to Christmas she had the tutorial group in stitches by going through part of a routine she was doing for the pantomine her theatrical group was putting on. It involved a Shirley Temple type of performance in which she played a recorder. In fact she plays the recorder rather well, a skill that will not be wasted in child care.

As part of the portfolio development I have had her do assignments in the following areas:

- reviews of children's books
- allergies of young children
- hyperactivity
- first aid.

These are presented in the portfolio* and I believe the assessment panel will find they are of equal or higher standard to what we expect of our normal student intake.

Overall my assessment is that Barbara has demonstrated sufficient competency to merit the exemption she is requesting.

Lorraine Hobart.

LORRAINE HOBART
Tutor.

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* Only book reviews are provided in this extract.

BOOK REVIEWS

ASSIGNMENT

Un-wittingly I have chosen for my two book reviews, stories about cats. It may well have something to do with the passionate and almost obsessive love I have for my own cat who lords my household without question. But I also feel very strongly that through the introduction of animals (whether as personal pets, or as delightful characters in story books) children can learn without threat to express care and love and concern for other living creatures, and in turn for their fellow human beings.

In both MOG and THE PATCHWORK CAT the animals have distinctly human qualities, qualities inherent in children: qualities of curiosity, humour and the need for love, comfort, safety and securit

Nicola Bayley and William Mayne's THE PATCHWORK CAT introduces to the reader the concepts of safety and the importance of the need for a sense of security. Tabby, the patchwork cat, angry at the fact that her favourite quilt has been discarded, finds herself on a terrifying journey. On investigation, she discovers the quilt sacreligiously thrown in the garbage can, and as she attempts to retrieve it, she, and the garbage are up-ended into a truck that is destined for the dump. After a frightening night spent alone, in the rat-infested horrors of the dump, Tabby tentatively makes her way home, dragging with her, the much-loved quilt. She is fortuitously rescued by the smiling and familiar milkman who delivers her safely home. Some things ARE worth retrieving, and despite her traumatic journey, once home, Tabby relaxes in an environment of familiarity and security. And it is this theme... the importance of safety and security that makes this book such a special one.

In short sentences, using language that is uncluttered and direct, Tabby's character, personality and habits are introduced and recognisable immediately. She is a cat who likes her household and the pleasures and comforts it offers her. The reader is instantly aware of a familiar and comforting routine that is imperative for Tabby's own assured well-being. Her morning stretch

the arrival of the much loved milkman and the patchwork quilt are necessary and consistant experiences in her daily life. It is only when these routines, through the disappearance of the quilt, are upset, that Tabby's life becomes so frightening and chaotic.

The story moves quickly and easily from one experience to the next, with the beautifully detailed illustrations in delicate and muted colours, directly and cleverly contrastin the simple sentence structure. It is as if the words give only the out-line of the story and the illustrations bring to life the colours and excitement, the fears and the loneliness and the joys and the wonders of the actual experiences. Tabby's actions are conveyed and expressed in the written text, but her emotions, dreams and desires are exposed in the illustrations. With the story printed on one page and the outstanding oval illustrations opposite, a child could hardly become disinterested. And below the words, intricate and detailed miniature sketches in fine nib, black and white, further illucidating the qualities and the personality of Tabby.

Although the narrative is simple and direct, I feel it in no way alters the effect, on the reader of the over-all story. Using pure, uncomplicated sounds the author has successfully combined simple alliteration, that, when vocalised produces a delightful almost humourous rhythm. "Good morning, good yawning" illustrates beautifully the lazy, warm awakening of a sleepy sun-drenched cat, and the onomatopoeia in the stark and bold line "bang and crash, and black and thick the dark." certainly highlight elements of excitement and wonder relating to the adventures that befall Tabby.

The simple plot, with an easily recognisable beginning, middle and end only lends itself to a story that all children can relate to. Tabby's secure existance is swept away into a frightening eddy of insecurity and unfamiliarity with the loss of a much treasured possession; her quilt. Did mother have the right to throw the quilt away? Were Tabby's adventures worth the retrieval? What made Tabby's quilt so special? So many discussions and issues could be initiated from the reading of this very special book.

The large print on good quality paper, the startling and glossy cover, and the superbly coloured and detailed illustrations certainly culminate in what I consider to be a very special book, for both children and adults alike.

In MOG, Judith Kerr introduces the reader immediately, to the household and to Mog's particular personality trait; that of forgetfulness. It is this trait, which is followed throughout the book that forms the basis of the story-line, and from which all other events spring.

Mog endears herself to the children in the family; Nicky and Debbie, but through her very kittenish antics, places herself in a less than favourable position with the parents. The events that her natural curiosity and her own particular personality lead her to cleverly and clearly illustrate the simple and un-complicated plot. Mog doesn't intentionally ruin the flowers in the window box; she doesn't mean to crush mother's hat, and she certainly doesn't mean to frighten Debbie. Unfortunately, these accidents of forgetful whim lead to the chagrin of her much loved family, resulting in her dashing out into an ominous night-time garden feeling lonely, unloved and disconsolately alone. Life away from the security and love of her home is distressing and alienating for her. In need of comfort and a re-assurance that she is 'O.K.' she returns to the infamous window box, where the house appears dark and forboding. The flicker of light coming from the kitchen offers warmth and affection, and she sets about gaining the attention of whoever it is, that holds that light. Unwittingly, she startles a burglar and is given a heroe's applause from the family whom she thought had abandoned her.

The story travels easily and humourously to the climax, with the narrative competantly expressing Mog's mischievous and affectionate antics. I feel that it is the language that creates the essential flavour of this book, and although the illustrations are bold, colourful and descriptive, they serve merely to highlight Mog's personality and her predicament. It is the language that expresses the exasperation of Mog's family. The repeated phrase of 'Bother that cat!' and then the endearments that follow create a comforting sense of approval by the children, regardless of Mog's somewhat annoying and whimsical personality flaws. Only when Debbie rejects her, does Mog, (and consequently and effectively the reader

feel isolated and alone. How easy it is to become annoyed at particular personality traits, that, although they may be very much an inherent part of a persons character, may cause anger and frustration in others. It is all too easy to become locked in to focusing on unpleasant aspects and not see the joys and delights of a person. There are many and varied aspects to all of us, and it is essential for all persons to have the confidence and self-esteem to express confidently and comfortably, who they are. Mog's self image certainly takes a shattering blow when she is eventually rejected by Debbie.

Mog's endearing naivete and innocence is portrayed simply and eloquently in expressive sentences. The conversation is direct and uncluttered, with the actions depicted in the illustrations adding detail and interest to the storyline. Mog's personality is instantly identifiable with an appeal that could touch even the most adamant of 'cat-haters'.

The bold expressive illustration on the front cover holds instant appeal. There is a little of Mog in all of us. And in all of us there is the most desperate of needs to feel accepted. Through MOG, Judith Kerr introduces the child to the 'I'm O.K., You're O.K.' concept: the idea of accepting and liking people for all of their qualities.

Although both books are substantially different in style and illustration, they both have strong and impressive points to make. For all children there is an overwhelming necessity to feel loved, secure and safe. As a lover of cats and a lover of literature, MOG and THE PATCHWORK CAT hold a special place in my collection.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Kerr Judith MOG THE FORGETFUL CAT

Collins Sons and Co Ltd.
1975

First Published 1970

Nicola Bayley · THE PATCHWORK CAT
William Mayne

Puffin
1986

First published 1981.

TESTIMONIALS

SUNDRIES

MARDEN PLAYGROUP
NEWSLETTER

DIRECTOR'S REPORT: . . From Rebecca Curtain

Welcome to Giulia Reveruzzi, our new Staff Member at the Centre, and to Lisa and Anita, two volunteers currently working with us.

We've changed our layout at the Centre to escape the wintery weather. Can you spot the Library Corner and Dress-Up Corner in their new places?

I am generally very pleased with how the program is going - Thank you Marie and other staff.

As from June 1st, Jennifer and I will be doing the Nursery. I hope they have plenty of patience and nappy pins for me.

Our state of health is usual for this time of the year - a few coughs and colds. We will have to watch the cold sores that may develop.

NOTICE TO NEWSLETTER CONTRIBUTORS
Please, Please, Contribute!

BITS AND PIECES . . . From the Editor

Some parking fines have been incurred around the Centre - be aware of the restrictions there.

With the three new additions from the Nursery, the Centre is now full - NO ROOM AT THE INN!

Thank you to Bronte Stirling for obtaining the carpet which has been laid in the School Room Annexe.

The new bathroom is still over estimated cost - as yet we don't know how much.

A special meeting of Management Committee will be held on June 9th at 7:45 p.m., to discuss the New Constitution.

A very big thank you must be extended to Jill Thomas for the use of her house during bathroom renovations.

Development Screening by the C.A.H.F.S. for 4 1/2 year olds has been cancelled, because C.A.H.F.S. will not come out to a group of less than 20. Concerned parents who cannot attend the week-day clinics because of work commitments may like to write to C.A.H.F.S. expressing their concerns, about their children missing this important pre-school screening.

If horses wear horse shoes, what do camels wear?
Desert boots.

What did the biscuit say when his friend was run over?
Oh crumbs!

CONCERT FOR 3 - 8 YEAR OLDS

That most enjoyable performer, Hugh Guthrie, is giving an hour-long concert at Marden Town Hall on Sunday, June 14th at 2:00 p.m. Children really love his songs, as you may know if you've ever served your family "Spaghetti Bolognaise" to the accompanyment of a tuneful chorus!!! Tickets are $3.00 Adults; $1.50 Children: available through Pauline Mageean. Phone 42 7905 in the afternoon/evening.

A TIP FOR THE DADS!
This Saturday BREAKFAST IN BED looks to be a sure winner - try for a piece of the action by getting it for her.

NURSERY NEWS . . . From Denise

We are missing Marjolijn, but hope we're continuing to give her kind of tender-loving-care to the babies.

The Bathroom Renovations continue . . . we've even had our temporary bathroom in the hallway!!!

Shannon, our new cook, has settled in well and is successfully coping with the demands. (Thanks to Geoff for his support).

We are very pleased to have little Max return to the Fold.

We say farewell to young Kevin who is "graduating" on July 1st.

FROM CHOICE MAGAZINE

Did you know?

Kids are more likely to eat sweet foods if:

- they watch a lot of television
- their mum or dad eats sweet food regularly
- their mum or dad gives them sweet foods as a reward for good behaviour.

What's you favourite television commercial? Chances are the ads you like most drive your friends or family crazy and the ones they like are yukky to you.

Some of the ads kids told us they like most are the ads for Fanta, Mars Bars and Samboy Chips. Ads some kids least like are for Cottees, CCs and Crunchies. The McDonalds, Coca-Cola and Slurpees ads were a funny mixture – most liked by some kids and least liked by others.

BARBARA X: EDITOR
PHONE: 42 7905

Assessing the Portfolio

The assessment of a portfolio is a challenging task because each one is a unique collection of information. Therefore each portfolio requires its own unique set of assessments; there is no single method of portfolio assessment. However, in most cases the following elements require assessment:

- autobiographical narrative
- statement on special competencies
- assignments set by tutor
- work samples
- testimonials and references.

The assessment of Barbara's portfolio is carried out by three individuals. Two are TAFE teachers (from different Colleges) and the third is a Director of a Child Care Centre. All three have attended training programs in portfolio assessment and interviewing techniques.

The autobiographical narrative and the statements on special competencies that Barbara has provided have to be checked against the performance objectives (or terminal objectives as they are called in the Appendix) for which exemption is claimed. For example, the assessors would look for evidence that objectives from the 'Health, Nutrition and Caregiving Practices' subjects have been covered as Barbara claims. As a 'successful' mother of two it's likely that she can:

- describe the processes involved from conception, through pregnancy to birth;
- describe factors that influence development during the ante-natal period;
- outline the nutritional requirements of women during pregnancy and lactation;
- describe how to assess the needs of neonates, and the subsequent appropriate action;
- describe the establishment and maintenance of successful breast feeding;
- demonstrate the preparation of infant formulas using appropriate hygiene procedures;

- describe how to establish and maintain successful bottle feeding;

- describe daily care procedures of neonates;

- describe factors which support the establishment and maintenance of parent-neonate relationships (Appendix pp.50 - 52).

The method the assessors use when doing this is to treat the objectives as a checklist and to tick each one that is covered by her narrative and statements.

Assignments set by the tutor are a different element. They will have been set for a variety of reasons but the standards expected of Barbara will not differ from those expected from any other student taking the course. Assignments would therefore be assessed as though they were a part of the normal course.

Work samples must be checked for both relevance and standards. Barbara has submitted an example of the newsletter she prepares for her playgroup parents. The assessors can judge this for relevance against a four-point scale:

Highly Relevant	:	Relevant	:	Of Some Relevance	:	Of Little or no Relevance

and the standard of the work as:

High	:	Satisfactory	:	Fair	:	Poor

In judging work samples, assessors can make use of exemplars to assist them to reach their decisions. In Barbara's case it would be possible to obtain a range of Child Care Centre newsletters which could be graded as above. Her work could then be judged against these.

Testimonials and references are yet another element. These are treated as supportive evidence for the claimed competencies. Once again the checklist approach can be used with ticks placed against competencies that are attested to in testimonials and references.

While separate judgments can be made about each of the above elements, in the final analysis it is a holistic judgment that is required. Portfolio assessment is a good example of where thre is need for the whole to be greater than the sum of its parts. The assessors are responsible for saying whether or not, after taking all the evidence into account, the requested provisional exemption should be granted.

The Interview

Despite the frequent criticisms about its lack of reliability and validity, the interview remains the most widely used selection device in business and industry. There is a natural desire on the part of the selectors to establish personal contact with applicants and make face-to-face assessments of them. Few managers are willing to employ people, particularly for responsible positions, without first interviewing them in an attempt to uncover information not disclosed by the application form or any test that may have been used.

The situation when assessing experiential learning is no different. The interviewers need to follow up information they have read about in the portfolio. They also have the opportunity to ask questions which will reveal the limits of the knowledge, skills or attitudes that Barbara claims to have. The interview seeks to clarify issues rather than test specific knowledge. If oral assessment of specific knowledge is required it is best carried out when the applicant is working in the child care centre under provisional exemption.

A great deal has been written about the conduct of interviews and this will not be repeated here[19]. Suffice it to say that the interview used in assessing experiential learning is structured and the interviewers must prepare their questions and plan the way they will ask them.

The extract of Barbara's interview that follows deals with her knowledge about childrens' illnesses and first aid.

EXTRACT FROM INTERVIEW WITH
BARBARA X

THE INTERVIEW IS SEPARATE FROM THE PORTFOLIO, HOWEVER THE CONTENTS OF THE PORTFOLIO PROVIDE MOST OF THE BACKGROUND INFORMATION UPON WHICH THE INTERVIEW IS BASED

SELECTED EXTRACT FROM INTERVIEW

. . . .

INTERVIEWER (lead-in question)

Barbara, I see on your form you have a boy and a girl, were they equally easy to raise?

BARBARA

Oh no, girls are much easier. Well, at least that's what my friends and I have found. In my case it was certainly true; Troy seemed to catch everything and gave me heaps of problems but Samantha hardly ever got sick.

INTERVIEWER (probing question)

Tell us about Troy's illnesses, did he get all the common illnesses?

BARBARA

You name it, Troy's had it. Though you wouldn't think so when you look at him today, he's just 14 and he's already as tall as his Dad and almost as strong.

But when he was a baby it was one thing after another, he'd had chicken pox, measles, and mumps before he started school - and he always seemed to be in the wars, you know, scratches, cuts - he fell on some broken glass once and cut his leg so badly we had to take him to hospital for stitches. Another time he rode his bike into the wall and cracked his head and got concussion.

INTERVIEWER (probing again)

How did you know it was concussion?

BARBARA

Well I didn't at first. But I saw him hit his head and it was a nasty bang. I made him lie down and he went very pale - lost all his colour and seemed dopey - so I rang the doctor and he told me to bring him straight around to the surgery.

The doctor told me it was slight concussion and to keep him quiet for a day or two.

INTERVIEWER (pursuing line of questioning)

So do you know what to do when you suspect a child might have concussion?

BARBARA

Well, only that you have to watch them carefully and make sure they rest and get to see a doctor as soon as possible. Arch, that's my husband, is in St. Johns so he's the expert in our house. (Laughs) But he has shown me what to do, you know, the way they should lie down if they are half-conscious and that sort of thing.

INTERVIEWER

Have you done a first aid course yourself?

BARBARA

No, like I said that's Archie's speciality. He's told me what to do to help the kids when they have an accident, and I know about the bandaging. When he was going for his exams in St. Johns he used to practice on me. (Laughs).

Once he had me so trussed up I couldn't move!

INTERVIEWER

What about serious illnesses, have either of your children been seriously ill?

BARBARA

There was one time. It was just after Troy was born, he was only four weeks old and I could tell there was something seriously wrong with him. You know, you know something's wrong but can't put your finger on it.

He was having these periods when he was obviously in pain and I'd pick him up and it would go away but it would come back a few hours later.

At any rate it started to get worse one weekend. Arch was away on a fishing trip with his mates, and Troy was crying and crying and I knew it was serious. So after not sleeping all Friday night I picked him up and drove around to the Emergency Unit at the hospital and this young doctor examined him and took him straight in. They operated that morning. It was a hernia, and it was very serious.

INTERVIEWER

Did the doctor explain to you what the problem was?

BARBARA

Yes, I do know that. Been through it twice with Troy now. He had a defect at birth, apparently, and part of the intestine slipped through a hole between the stomach and the scrotum. In Troy's case the piece of intestine was being strangled and that was causing the pain. The same thing happened again on the other side when he was two, but I knew what was wrong that time and didn't get so worried. We had him circumcised then as well, (Laughs) but that's another story. . . .

Assessing the Interview

The conduct and assessment of Barbara's interview is carried out by the same three individuals who assessed her portfolio. All three have attended training programs in interviewing techniques.

The interview is conducted in a structured manner and an interview checklist which again grades Barbara against the experiential learning she is claiming is completed by each assessor.

The interviewer's checklist consists of the competency areas for which Barbara is claiming exemption, that is:

Human Development - Foundation Module
Caregiving Practices - Foundation Module
Program Planning - Foundation Module
Health and Nutrition - Foundation Module
Communications and Human Relations - Foundation Module
Family and Society - Foundation Module
The Work Environment - Foundation Module
Introduction to Tertiary Study - Foundation Module
Human Development and Caregiving Practices 0-6 yrs (part modules)
Field Education 0-6 yrs.

Details of the competences (expressed as 'terminal objectives') can be found in the Appendix, pages 42 - 56. Questions (pre-planned by the interviewers) are asked on these areas and a grading is given alongside each area using a four point scale, as follows:

Standard of Knowledge, Skills or Attitudes Appropriate to the Competency Area is:

Very High to Outstanding	:	Satisfactory to High	:	Borderline to Fair	:	Below Borderline

The same rating scale can be used to assess some of Barbara's other qualities such as:

- Ability to Communicate
- Level of Motivation to be Child Care Worker
- Personality.

These last three would be overall ratings made at the end of the interview.

Granting Provisional Exemption

Based on the evidence that is now before them, the three assessors arrive at a decision about how much provisional exemption they are prepared to grant Barbara.

The exemption is awarded provisionally because the certifying authority needs to validate that the applicants can actually perform the skills they claim to have learnt through life experiences. It is not realistic to expect an applicant to provide evidence about all competencies that are claimed when making the application for exemption. This would make the portfolio an impossibly long and unmanageable document. And the interview can only 'sample' the competencies, otherwise it, similarly, would become a marathon performance. The only place where the full validation can take place is in the field, because only in the day-to-day work of a Centre can a wide range of competencies be demonstrated and assessed. Barbara therefore begins her training at a Child Care Centre immediately after she has been given provisional exemption.

The decision as to where Barbara should be sent for field work is most important. It would be unwise to use only one Centre and one Director as this introduces the possibility of bias. The broader the range of field placements she has the better. At least three should be aimed for over the four to five month period. The Centre Director has a vital role in certifying that competencies have been demonstrated. The Director's work should be complemented by regular visits from a field-based trainer or college lecturer who assists the Director in making assessments.

The ratification or otherwise of the exemption granted relies heavily on the log book she completes during the first four months of field work.

The Log Book

Log books are used to record the performance of competencies for which the applicant has been given provisional exemption. Entries in the book are confined to those competencies for which exemption is being sought. This means that the student might have two log books, one for 'exemption' the other for the remainder of the course. Here we are only interested in the 'exemption' book.

In ideal cases all the competencies for which exemption has been given would be dealt with using the log book. However, this will not always be possible, for example, the ability to work with children with special needs cannot be demonstrated if such children are not present in the child care centres to which the applicant is attached. When this occurs other methods of assessment must be used. These are discussed on page 25.

Log book entries are made only if they record relevant events, so there is no fixed frequency recommended, although weekly entries would seem to be a minimal requirement. Entries are made after discussion with the Director of the child care facility and each entry is attested to by the Director as a true record of the event described in the log book. This is done on the Supervisor's Assessment Form which accompanies each log book entry.

An extract from Barbara's log book follows, it describes how she demonstrated a particular competency in the use of observation techniques.

EXTRACT FROM THE LOG BOOK OF

BARBARA X

(WHO HAS BEEN GIVEN PROVISIONAL EXEMPTION AND IS WORKING AT THE PAYNEHAM CHILD CARE CENTRE)

EXTRACT FROM BARBARA X's LOG BOOK

PROVISIONAL EXEMPTION SKILLS

Number(s) 16 (Human Development - Foundation)

Description Demonstrate competence in the use of observation techniques

Date 2/3/88

EXPLAIN IN YOUR OWN WORDS HOW YOU HAVE DEMONSTRATED THE ABOVE SKILL(S)

Ever since she arrived at the Centre little Petchong has been very quiet. She would hardly ever play with the other children and always wanted to play with the yellow tractor and would sit and sulk if somebody took it away from her. I assumed this was part of her being Asian and that she was naturally timid or retiring.

But last week I noticed that she always pushed the tractor with her left hand, never her right, even though in everything else she was right-handed. Well that got me thinking because the tractor made a fair racket when pushed over the floor, and other things occurred to me, like Petchong not always coming when she was called and things like that.

So when Ms Ng came to get her that afternoon I asked if

she had ever had. Petchong's hearing tested and she didn't seem to be sure. Well, while she was there I rang Dr Ceilens and made an appointment for them to see him. It turns out that Petchong is almost deaf in her right ear and now she has a brand new hearing aid she is a different kid – almost too different – she's driving me mad with her questions.

SUPERVISOR'S ASSESSMENT FORM

(TO ACCOMPANY EACH LOG BOOK ENTRY OF STUDENT)

Provisional Exemption Skill No. 16

SUPERIOR'S ASSESSMENT

Please answer the following questions.

1.0 Do you agree that the accompanying log book entry is an accurate summary of the events that occurred?

☑ YES	go to Q. 2.0
NO	go to Q. 1.1

1.1 If NO, how would you vary the description?

_____

_____

_____

_____

2.0 Did you personally observe the events described in the log book or was it another member of staff?

☑ YES	go to Q. 3.0
NO	go to Q. 2.1

2.1 If NO, state name and position of observer.

_____

_____

3.0 Do you have any further comments to add that are relevant to assessing this skill?

Barbara's initiative with Mrs Ng bore fruit in that a number of other mothers decided to have their childrens' hearing tested. Fortunately no more cases were detected.

One unanticipated benefit of Petchong's problem is that Mrs Ng is now much better accepted by the other mothers who can ask about her daughter's hearing. Mrs. Ng has even volunteered (with some pushing from Barbara) to give a Vietnamese cookery demonstration at our next parent's night.

Signature: Judith Clancy

Position: DIRECTOR

Centre: PAYNEHAM

Date: 8.3.88

Other Assessments

Barbara has the period between February and June to demonstrate that she has the competencies for which she has been given provisional exemption. As that time progresses it may become apparent that she will not have the opportunity to cover all the competencies. Should this be the case she can offer herself for additional assessments during the period of provisional exemption.

These other assessments would be planned by her assessment panel and she would be informed what was to be assessed, how it would be done and given time to prepare herself. The additional techniques that could be used include performance tests, simulations and oral tests.[20]

For example, as a performance test she might be required to 'demonstrate practical skills in serving a variety of meals and snacks' (Appendix p.52).

As a simulation test she might be told to pretend a child has a broken arm and 'perform first aid to the level of the St. Johns Basic First Aid Certificate' (Appendix p.45).

For an oral test she could be asked to 'identify and discuss principles of financial management' (Appendix p.48).

Any or all these techniques are available if there is a need to confirm that a competency is present.

Summary of Assessment Procedures for Experiential Learning

- The assessment process uses an assessment panel which consists of three people, two experienced teachers and a Director of a Child Care Centre.
- The panel members have been trained in the methods of assessing portfolios and interview performance.
- The same panel assesses both portfolio and interview performance.
- Assessment of portfolios involves:
  - checking relevance of competencies claimed against course outcomes;
  - classifying work presented against rating scales, using a set of exemplars whenever possible.
- Assessment of interview performance is done using a structured interview and checklist.
- Provisional exemption is granted by the assessment panel.
- Assessment of performance continues in the field during the period in which provisional exemption has been granted. This is done mainly through the use of a log book to record competencies which are then attested to (where appropriate) by the Centre Director.
- Other assessments may be specially designed when applicant is in the field, including performance assessments, oral tests etc.
- Exemption is ratified on the basis of successful progress through all the above stages.

Cost Benefits

If it all goes well for Barbara she will graduate at the end of the year and get herself a job as a qualified child care worker where her considerable talents can come into play.

Barbara has made a significant financial commitment to get her Certificate as she has had to give up her part-time job at the newsagents for almost a year. However, thanks to the exemptions she received, this has been for half the time it would normally have taken her.

As far as the staff at the TAFE college where Barbara trained are concerned, the amount of teaching time she required has been much less than that required by the other students — but not half. The preparation of her portfolio required regular sessions with a tutor for a period of three months and the assessment of the portfolio and interview also involved staff time. Nevertheless, Barbara has reached graduation using considerably less staff and college resources than are required by the normal student intake. A saving of around 30% of the cost of producing a graduate is a reasonable estimate.

However, far more important than the cost-based considerations are the personal benefits that accompany the process. We now have a person with a particular set of skills working in an area she enjoys. Not only is she productive twelve months earlier than expected, but in addition we need to appreciate that without the credits for her experiential learning she might not have embarked upon the course in the first place.

What price can be put on the difference between Barbara as an unsatisfied shop assistant and Barbara as a satisfied and stimulating child care worker?

CONCLUSIONS

One of the great unknowns in a project of this nature is the size of the pool of people interested in seeking credit for their experience. We don't know how many Barbara X's are out there wanting to be child care workers. Nor do we know how many delicatessen owners would like to do a Business Studies Certificate, or the number of nurses who would want to become doctors if their experience would enable them to obtain some credit. And until we have procedures in place which can provide people with credit for their experience, we are unlikely to find out just what is the real demand.

This report has argued that the proposals to give credit for experience in Australia have foundered because of the difficulties associated with the assessment of this type of learning. To some extent these difficulties are a consequence of the relatively unsophisticated nature of our methods for assessing performance. One cannot help but get the feeling that satisfactory achievement on paper-and-pencil tests is perceived by most people as having a higher status than satisfactory performance in practical work. Yet the reverse should be the case. It doesn't matter how much somebody can write about brake systems if they can't fix the brakes on my car properly, or how well somebody can describe the symptoms of concussion in a test paper, if they can't recognise that a child they are caring for is concussed.

The proposal put here is that we make a commitment to move away from the present over-emphasis on classroom assessments using written assignments and paper-and-pencil tests and to instead concentrate more on practical assessments. In particular, the assessment of performance on-the-job.

Portfolios can be developed that ensure the majority of evidence presented about a person's experiential learning relates to their performance in work situations. And, given that whatever exemption granted is provisional, the most important element of the assessment process then becomes the judgments about performance in the field.

The methods that have been described here for the assessment of portfolios, interviews and performance on-the-job are not new. They are well tried and tested in other areas. What is needed now are decision-makers prepared to bring about their implementation for assessing experiential learning. Once such a decision were taken there would, of course, be establishment costs for staff and materials development to get the assessment processes underway. However, in a short time the savings in training costs and the benefits to the Australian workforce in general would be substantial.

We have now arrived at a situation where we must ask in the strongest of terms 'Why is so little being done to encourage Australians to make use of their experiences in life?'

NOTES

1 A review of the European procedures can be found in Mitter W (ed) The Uses of Tests and Interviews for Admission to Higher Education. Windsor, Eng: NFER, 1979.

2 A detailed study of work experience as a substitute for formal academic entrance requirements in Sweden is provided by Abrahamsson K, Kim L, and Rubenson K. The Value of Work Experience in Higher Education. Stockholm: Stockholm Institute of Education, 1980 (ED 213 272).

3 Some of the earliest work referred to here has been reported by Toyne P., Educational Credit Transfer. London: Department of Education and Science, 1979 who noted:

> ...Over the last two years or so, interest in the assessment of experiential learning (giving credit for uncertificated learning experience) has been growing rapidly. This is likely to be even more contentious than the assessment of alternative formal qualifications, although there is much helpful methodology available. So, while there is still some way to go before widely recognised methods of granting credit by this innovative and exciting method will be accepted, the development work continues in earnest. (p 2)

More recently Norman Evans has reviewed the progress and practice in the United Kingdom in Assessing Experiential Learning, London, Further Education Unit (FEU), 1987; and identified three examples involving the provision of academic credit or advanced professional standing.

4 In 1977 the work was transferred to the Council for the Advancement of Experiential Learning, not only the same acronym, but also much the same operation.

5 A listing of the CAEL reports can be found in Keeton M T & Associates Experiential Learning: Rationale, Characteristics, and Assessment. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1976. A second publication, sponsored by CAEL, with a emphasis on cost-benefit issues is in Mac Taggart T (ed) Cost-effective Assessment of Prior Learning in New Directions for Experiential Learning, Jossey-Bass, 1983.

6 See: Strachan F and Thomson P. Australian Practices in Crediting the Previous Training and Experience of Mature-aged Students in Formal TAFE Courses. Adelaide: TAFE National Centre for Research and Development, February 1987. One of the conclusions reached in this paper is that any trade or profession that falls outside the responsibilities of committees administering the Tradesman's Rights Regulation Act, 1946, or the committees of the Council on Overseas Professional Qualifications is at present poorly served, irrespective of whether the experiential learning was formal or informal.

7 Indeed, a search of the Australian literature provides very lean pickings. McGee D W in an unpublished M Ed Thesis - A Pilot Study which Assesses the Effect of Work Experience on Performance of Students in One Subject of a TAFE Technician-level Course (U of Newcastle, 1986) and White J L The Assessment of Experiential Learning of TAFE Students. N.S.W. Department of TAFE, mimeograph, (no date), were the only two experimental studies located.

It should, however, be conceded that some professional associations are prepared to admit outstanding 'unqualified' individuals to their ranks. The rules by which this is done are usually specific to the association and, in any case, their application comes only after many years of work experience directly related to the profession.

8 The Report of the Kirby Committee of Inquiry into Labour Market Programs to the Minister for Labour and Industry. Canberra: AGPS, January 1985, noted:

> . . . the growing need, stemming from changes in the requirements of employers and the growth in unemployment among adults, to provide training and retraining for mature-aged people . . . (p 139)

and drew attention to the:

> . . . need to assist the entry and re-entry of adults to education and training through formal recognition of previous training and experience . . . (p 140)

It therefore recommended that:

> The State training authorities and those responsible for the development of TAFE national common-core curricula should co-operate in an examination of the prospects for crediting previous training and experience of mature-aged students in formal course training. (Recommendation 43, p 141)

Apart from the commissioning of the report referred to in Note 6 above, there has been no action on this recommendation to the time of writing.

9 The four steps and the comparison between academic and experiential learning have been summarised from James Coleman's article 'Differences between Experiential and Classroom Learning' in Keeton M T & Associates, Experiential Learning: Rationale, Characteristics, and Assessment. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1976.

10 Kolb D A & Fry R Towards an Applied Theory of Experiential Learning in Cooper C L (ed) Theories of Group Processes. Bath, Eng: Wiley, 1975, drew on the earlier work of Lewin and his colleagues to develop their model.

11 George Bonham in a brief introduction to Chickering A W Experience and Learning Change Magazine Press, 1977 talks of experiential learning as dividing academic jocks from academic hippies and similar delightful analogies. Also, Kirkwood R, 'Importance of Assessing Learning' in Keeton M T & Associates, Experiential Learning: Rationale, Characteristics, and Assessment. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1976, draws attention to the fact that purists are more interested in years spent in educational institutions than the knowledge gained.

12 The literature on this subject is now quite voluminous. Those interested could start with Samson G E, Graue, M E, Weinstein, T, & Walberg H J 'Academic and Occupational Performance: A Quantitative Syntheses. American Educational Research Journal, 21, 311-321: 1984. The conclusion of their review puts the position as follows:

> . . . academic grades or test scores (are) nearly useless in predicting occupational effectiveness and satisfaction. Educators, employers, students and research workers need to think again about what is taught, learned and measured.

13 The process of setting performance standards has more than its fair share of critics. As Ronald Berk in 'A Consumer's Guide to Setting Performance Standards on Criterion-referenced Tests' (Review of Educational Research, 56, 1, 137-172, 1986) puts it, the setting of performance standards:

> 'remains controversial to discuss, difficult to execute, and almost impossible to defend'

Nevertheless we do specify competency standards to be achieved in our criterion-referenced tests, and we do make important decisions which affect the lives of the individuals taking those tests.

14 Berk's paper cited in Note 13 lays down rules which help overcome some of the worst problems associated with the setting of performance standards. He believes the method of setting standards should be both technically adequate and practical.

Each of these aspects can be further subdivided as follows:

Requirements of Technical Adequacy

(a) The method of setting standards should produce information which is appropriate to the context in which it will be used. If some form of certification is to follow, then the method of standard-setting should clearly distinguish success and failure, and should also include procedures to be followed in 'borderline' cases so that there is no doubt as to what happened and what should happen.

(b) The method of setting standards should be appropriate to those attempting to meet the standards. And the standards should reflect the actual performance of individuals who use the skills in 'real life' situations. For the standard to be judged as valid it must be logical and related to a specific level of job performance.

(c) The method of setting standards should be sensitive to the instruction or training or education that the candidates have had in preparation for certification. The standard should not incorporate previously-undisclosed requirements.

(d) The method of setting standards should be statistically sound, particularly when objective tests are used. This is especially true when judgements are made on the basis of summaries of other judgements from a number of sources, as when a composite score is obtained.

(e) The method of setting standards should acknowledge and take into account the potential of measurement errors which produce observed performances which differ from 'true' performance.

(f) The method of setting standards should lead to valid decision-making; in other words, the possibility of making erroneous judgments should be acknowledged and the procedures used should include steps for rectification in cases of error.

Requirements of Practicality

(g) The method should be easy to implement: everyone involved should understand clearly what is required.

(h) The method should be easy to carry out: for example, computations, where needed, should be manageable for those expected to carry them out.

(i) The method should be easy to explain to interested outside parties, not esoteric and impenetrable.

(j) The method should be credible to lay people. Complicated statistical procedures or 'black box methods' are not credible to the layperson.

15 Information about the course is provided in a SA Department of TAFE curriculum document entitled 'Advanced Certificate in Child Care' and dated October, 1987. The following extracts from that document provide further information.

> The course initially only available by attendance at a DTAFE College, although it is planned that some subjects will be offered in the external mode and/or a combination of modes.
>
> As the modules (except Foundation and Overview) can be taken in any order, and the college and field components do not need to be taken concurrently, students are less likely to encounter delays caused by timetabling.
>
> The course is designed to contain a breadth and depth of subject matters appropriate to the training of Child Care workers at Advanced Certificate level. The necessary theory is taught, and integrated throughout the course with practical exercises designed to show the application of the theory, and to develop skills.
>
> The structure of the Advanced Certificate comprises two major components - a Field-based component and a College-based component. The Field Education component correlates with part of the College component through corresponding modules which reflect the way in which the Child Care industry is structured, and titled "Foundation, Infants, Toddlers, Child 3-6 years, and Overview'. These modules are further extended by 'general' subjects which extend but are not specific to the modules, and which are taken at times when they are deemed to be appropriate to the student's own knowledge and acquisition of skills.
>
> The Foundation module is to be generic to all Community Care courses offered by TAFE in South Australia, and the Overview module affords students the opportunity to integrate all the preceding sections of the course and to pursue specific areas of interest in greater depth.

The structure of the course is set out schematically below.

PROPOSED COURSE STRUCTURE -OCTOBER 1987

		HUMAN DEV. & CAREGIVING PRACTICE	CAREGIVING SKILLS — PLANNING & PRACTICE	HEALTH & NUTRITION	FIELD EDUCATION Tutorial / Placement
MODULES	FOUND'N STUDIES	Human Develop 54 Hrs Caregiving Prac 27 Hrs	Programme Planning 27 Hrs Caregiving Skills Planning and Practice 18 Hrs	36 Hrs	63 Hrs
	INFANTS	27 Hrs	45 Hrs	49.5 Hrs	198 Hrs
	TODDLERS	27 Hrs	36 Hrs	22.5 Hrs	99 Hrs
	CHILD 3-6	36 Hrs	54 Hrs	45 Hrs	198 Hrs
	OVERVIEW		Caregiving Skills-Planning & Practice Directed Study 27 Hrs Programme Planning Overview - Directed Study 27 Hrs		99 Hrs

COMMUN' & HUMAN RELS		WORK ENVIRON'T		FAMILY & SOCIETY		INTRO TO TERT STUDY
Foundation	45 Hrs	Foundation	54 Hrs	Foundation	36 Hrs	18 Hrs
Self Awareness & Communication	18 Hrs	Children's Services	18 Hrs	Family Resources & Services	36 Hrs	
Self Management & Group Commun	36 Hrs			Family Support & Liason	36 Hrs	
				Programming Implications	18 Hrs	

A broad range of assessment procedures is used throughout the Course. The assessment strategies used are designed to measure students' knowledge, skills and competencies, both at the beginning, and on a continuous basis, throughout the course.

The Advanced Certificate in Child Care requires students to integrate theoretical knowledge with practical skills in order to develop fundamental care giving skills and specific competencies.

The Field Education component of the Advanced Certificate in Child Care comprises approximately 43% of the total contact hours for the course. The course is designed to provide students with access to a wide variety of Child Care settings in which they are able to develop and practice the competence required by a Child Care worker. Most of these skills need to be taught to students while they are working directly with children, as students re required to interact and re-act in situations which it is impossible to simulate in the College setting.

The Field Placement therefore affords students the opportunity to develop resources, both personal and physical and to refine approaches to caregiving. Thus the Field Education placements provide students with both the basic skill development and skill enhancement aspects of the practical training.

16 The scheme proposed allows entry into the course at only one time in the year. This has been done to avoid any possible confusion that might result if multiple entry times were being advocated in this report. In fact, it is the author's opinion that a multiple entry scheme is preferable, and that entry could be arranged to take place at least three times a year.

17 Each subject of the course is described in terms of its AIMS and TERMINAL OBJECTIVES. The following example is the subject:

HUMAN DEVELOPMENT AND CARE GIVING PRACTICES - CHILD 3-6 YEARS which is a 36 hour program.

The aims and objectives of this subject are nearly identical with those of the modules on human development and caregiving practices for 'toddlers' and 'infants' (refer scheme of course under NOTE 15). The only significant difference is the age of the children under consideration.

AIM:

That students will develop knowledge and understanding of the growth and development of children from three to six years.

That students develop knowledge and understanding of the role of the caregiver in facilitating the growth and development of children from three to six years.

TERMINAL OBJECTIVES:

On successful completion of this subject the student should be able to:

describe, referring to major theories and research, the physical, social, emotional, cognitive and language (including literacy) development of children from three to six years;

identify factors which influence development from three to six years;

explain the interrelatedness of all areas of development;

describe the role of the caregiver in facilitating the growth and development from three to six years;

describe special needs that may arise during early childhood due to individual differences in development;

use a variety of techniques to observe, record and interpret growth behaviour and development of children from three to six years;

outline the implications for caregivers of cultural differences in caregiving practices.

18 'HOW TO OBTAIN CREDIT FOR PAST EXPERIENCE: STUDENT GUIDELINES', is a booklet dealing with the following topics:

- An introduction to learning from experience
- How to apply for an exemption
- How to prepare a portfolio
- How to prepare for an interview
- How to complete a log book.

Like Barbara, however, at this point in time the details reside in the author's imagination.

19 For a useful review see Willingham W H, & Breland H M Personal qualities and College admission. New York: College Entrance Examination Board, 1982.

20 Some tests of the type envisaged have already been developed in Australia. In TAFE they are referred to as 'Challenge Tests' or 'Trade Tests' and one use to which they have been put is in the assessment of overseas qualifications. The Council on Overseas Professional Qualification has also developed tests for a number of professions which are used to assess overseas graduates who wish to practise their profession in Australia. The difference between these tests and those planned for experiential learning is that the latter are 'custom designed' for individual assessment whereas the former more closely resemble standardised tests. (See also Note 6).

APPENDIX

MODULES AND PART MODULES FROM WHICH BARBARA X IS SEEKING EXEMPTION

COURSE AND DURATION

	Total Hours	Hrs/Wk	Weeks	Credit Points	Exemption Requested (Tick as appropriate)
'Foundation' Module					
Human Development	54	3	18	11	
Caregiving Practices	27	1 1/2	18	5	
Programme Planning	27	1 1/2	18	5	
Health and Nutrition	36	2	18	7	
Communications and Human Relationships	45	1 2/3	27	9	✓
Family and Society	36	2	18	7	
The Work Environment	54	2	27	11	
Introduction to Tertiary Study	18	2	9	4	
SUB-TOTAL	297	-	-	59	
'Infants' Module					
Human Development and Caregiving Practices	27	1 1/2	18	5	
Caregiving Skills - Planning and Practice	45	2 1/2	18	9	
Health, Nutrition and Caregiving Practices	49.5	2 3/4	18	10	✓
SUB-TOTAL	121.5	-	-	24	
'Toddlers' Module					
Human Development and Caregiving Practices	27	3	9	5	
Caregiving Skills - Planning and Practice	36	4	9	7	
Health, Nutrition and Caregiving Practices	22.5	2 1/2	9	4	✓
SUB-TOTAL	85.5	-	-	16	

	Total Hours	Hrs/Wk	Weeks	Credit Points	Exemption Requested (Tick as appropriate)
'Child 3-6 years' Module					
Human Development and Caregiving Practices	36	2	18	7	
Caregiving Skills - Planning and Practice	54	3	18	11	
Health, Nutrition and Caregiving Practices	45	2 1/2	18	9	✓
SUB-TOTAL	135	-	-	27	
Field Education					
Introduction	63	3 1/2	18	4	✓
Infants	198	11	18	4	✓
Toddlers	99	11	9	2	✓
Child 3-6 years	198	11	18	4	✓
Overview	99	11	9	2	
SUB-TOTAL	657	-	-	16	
Other Studies					
Caregiving Skills - Planning and Practice:					
- Introduction	18	1	18	4	
- Directed Study	27	3	9	6	
Communication and Human Relationships:					
Communication and Self-Awareness	18	2	9	4	
Group Communication	36	4	9	7	
Family and Society:					
Family Resources and Services	36	2	18	7	
Family Support & Liaison	36	2	18	7	
Programming Implications	18	2	9	4	
The Work Environment:					
Children's Services	18	2	9	4	
Programme Planning - overview:					
- Directed Study	27	3	9	6	
SUB-TOTAL	234	-	-	49	
TOTAL	1530	-	-	191	
LESS EXEMPTIONS	972	-	-	96	
TO BE COMPLETED	558hrs			95 Credit Points	

The following subject syllabuses are reproduced from the curriculum document

S.A. DEPARTMENT OF TECHNICAL AND FURTHER EDUCATION

SUBJECT SYLLABUS

SUBJECT TITLE:

Human Development:- Foundation

TIME: 54 hours
EFFECTIVE DATE: February 1988
SUBJECT CODE: BTBD

AIM:

That students gain a broad overview of human development and the life cycle.

PRE-REQUISITE:

Nil

TERMINAL OBJECTIVES:

On successful completion of this subject the student should be able to:

outline the scientific processes as related to the study of human development;

outline the major theoretical approaches to human development;

identify the principles of human growth and development;

define relevant terms such as growth, development maturation, learning;

describe the meaning of physical development, motor development, social development, emotional development, cognitive development, language development;

identify factors which influence human development;

outline the processes of conception, pregnancy and birth;

identify the stages of physical, motor, social, emotional, cognitive, language development from birth to twelve years;

identify the significant developmental changes in adolescence;

identify the major stages of development from early adulthood to old age;

identify the special needs that may arise from individual differences in development;

explain the concept of disability;

explain the concept of normalisation;

clarify their own attitudes to exceptionality;

discuss changing community attitudes to exceptionality;

demonstrate competence in the use of observation techniques.

S.A. DEPARTMENT OF TECHNICAL AND FURTHER EDUCATION

SUBJECT SYLLABUS

SUBJECT TITLE:

Communication and Human Relationships:- Foundation

TIME: 45 hours
EFFECTIVE DATE: February 1988
SUBJECT CODE: BTBH

AIM:

That students gain an overview of communication, develop interpersonal skills in one to one and small group of situations.
That students will gain skills that will assist them in problem solving and personal management

PRE-REQUISITE: Nil

TERMINAL OBJECTIVES:

On successful completion of this subject the student should be able to:

discuss model(s) of the communication process;

discuss how and why breakdown occurs in the communication process;

identify and discuss various non-verbal behaviours;

discuss the relationship between verbal and non-verbal language in the communication process;

demonstrate basic interpersonal skills of attending, active listening, observing and responding when communicating with individuals;

describe the part self-awareness, self disclosure and trust play in the development of relationships;

describe own positive personal attributes;

distinguish between assertive, non-assertive and aggressive communication;

demonstrate the ability to make an assertive statement;

identify and discuss stages in group development;

identify and discuss roles within groups;

identify personal stresses and relevant stress management techniques;

identify and discuss conflict resolution strategies;

identify a range of problem solving strategies and demonstrate skill in utilizing one such strategy;

identify personal goals and determine ways of achieving these;

identify a range of time management strategies and demonstrate basic skills in the appropriate use of these.

S.A. DEPARTMENT OF TECHNICAL AND FURTHER EDUCATION

SUBJECT SYLLABUS

SUBJECT TITLE:

Family and Society:- Foundation

TIME: 36 hours
EFFECTIVE DATE: February, 1988
SUBJECT CODE: BTBK

AIM:

That students will clarify personal beliefs, attitudes and values about structures and functions of families, be aware of and sensitive to those of others and explore the implications for caregiving practises within Australian society.

PRE-REQUISITE: Nil

TERMINAL OBJECTIVES:

On successful completion of this subject the student should be able to:

identify changing family structures throughout history and in other cultures;

outline historical trends which have influenced present notions of childhood and adolescence, and patterns of child care;

identify and discuss the rights and needs of individuals including the right to equal opportunity;

identify factors which influence the functioning of families;

identify and discuss stages in the human life span and family formation;

identify the relationship between family and society and identify social factors which influence changes in the function and structure of families;

outline the concepts of multiculturalism and cultural enrichment in relation to Australian society;

identify personal values and discuss how these are acquired and developed within families;

identify and discuss differing family file-styles within Australia;

identify and discuss implications for caregiving practises of differing family life-styles and values existing within Australia today.

S.A. DEPARTMENT OF TECHNICAL AND FURTHER EDUCATION

SUBJECT SYLLABUS

SUBJECT TITLE:

The Work Environment - Foundation

TIME: 54 hours
EFFECTIVE DATE: February, 1988
SUBJECT CODE: BTBL

AIM:

That students gain an understanding of the structures of health and care organisations. That students understand occupational health and safety, industrial relations and equal opportunity issues.

PRE-REQUISITE: Nil

TERMINAL OBJECTIVES:

On successful completion of this subject the student should be able to:

outline Health and Care Services in Australia;

describe the structure and function of health and care services;

identify ethical issues associated with working in health and care services;

describe the roles and responsibilities of workers, including roles of co-workers, clients and families, and students within health and care services;

outline Commonwealth and State legislation and legal responsibilities of the worker;

identify industrial safety issues within the work situation;

perform first aid to the level of the St. Johns Basic First Aid Certificate or equivalent;

identify Equal Opportunities issues and legislation in relation to health and care services;

outline the role of relevant industrial and professional organisations;

identify and discuss the key qualities of an ergonomically satisfactory work environment;

identify and discuss the effects of smoking on workers and clients;

identify and discuss the implementation of affirmative action policy within the workplace;

identify sources of employment appropriate to workers in health and care services;

identify and discuss issues and conditions related to employment.

S.A. DEPARTMENT OF TECHNICAL AND FURTHER EDUCATION

SUBJECT SYLLABUS

SUBJECT TITLE:

Health and Nutrition:- Foundation

TIME: 36 hours
EFFECTIVE DATE: February, 1988
SUBJECT CODE: BTBG

AIM:

That students gain an understanding of concepts of health and an awareness of the influences of nutrition and lifestyle on disease prevention.

PRE-REQUISITE: Nil

TERMINAL OBJECTIVES:

On successful completion of this subject the student should be able to:

define the broad concepts of health and describe community attitudes and beliefs regarding health;

describe and discuss the influeces of social, physical and psychological components in the development of disease;

discuss the influence of nutrition and its effects on the body's function and performance;

identify the major diet-related diseases in Australia, demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between physical activity and health;

describe the relationship between exercise, diet and weight control;

describe and discuss strategies of prevention of diet related diseases for a healthy population;

outline nutritional requirements that may occur for people with special needs;

discuss the effects of environment and lifestyle upon health;

S.A. DEPARTMENT OF TECHNICAL AND FURTHER EDUCATION

SUBJECT SYLLABUS

SUBJECT TITLE:

Caregiving Practices:- Foundation

TIME: 27 hours
EFFECTIVE DATE: Feb. 1988
SUBJECT CODE: BTBE

AIM:

That students gain an overview of current approaches to care giving practices.

PRE-REQUISITE: Nil.

TERMINAL OBJECTIVES:

On successful completion of this subject the student should be able to:

identify a range of care needs

discuss factors which contribute to the realization of full potential

discuss issues which influence and affect the need for care

discuss current approaches to caregiving in Australia

discuss curent social, political and economic issues relating to the provision of care

describe and discuss the concepts of deinstitutionalization and normalisation

describe significant historical changes and the effects on the development of attitudes and practices regarding care

demonstrate a basic understanding of cultural differences and care

describe and discuss current caregiving practices for children

describe and discuss current caregiving practices for adolescents

describe and discuss current caregiving practices for the aged

describe and discuss current caregiving practices for people with disabilities

S.A. DEPARTMENT OF TECHNICAL AND FURTHER EDUCATION

SUBJECT SYLLABUS

SUBJECT TITLE:

Programme Planning:- Foundation

TIME: 27 hours
EFFECTIVE DATE: February, 1988
SUBJECT CODE: BTBF

AIM:

That students develop a basic understanding of the skills needed for planning, implementing and evaluating a programme of care.

PRE-REQUISITE: Nil

CO-REQUISITE:

Field Education:- Introduction

TERMINAL OBJECTIVES:

On successful completion of this subject the student should be able to:

discuss the rationale for the development of care programmes;

identify and discuss the basic principles of planning and programming;

identify and discuss aspects of human resource management;

identify and discuss aspects of physical resource management;

identify and discuss principles of financial management;

identify and discuss monitoring and evaluation procedures;

identify and discuss the development and evaluation of programmes provided for specific needs of individual clients or groups of clients;

discuss reporting procedures for programme outcomes.

S.A. DEPARTMENT OF TECHNICAL AND FURTHER EDUCATION

SUBJECT SYLLABUS

SUBJECT TITLE:

Introduction to Tertiary Study

TIME: 18 hours
EFFECTIVE DATE: February, 1988
SUBJECT CODE: BTBM

AIM:

That students will gain information and develop study skills to enable them to study effectively.
That students will consider organisation of study requirements in relation to personal and family commitments.

PRE-REQUISITE: Nil

TERMINAL OBJECTIVES:

On successful completion of this subject the student should be able to:

use different reading methods - scanning, speed reading and reading for understanding;

know what library facilities are available to find information - books, periodicals, non-print materials, catalogues, vertical files and bibliographies;

search literature and other information resources, using indexes and bibliographies and keep a personal filing system of information found;

make appropriate notes from written material and from oral presentation or discussion;

plan and write a researched essay of designated length;

participate effectively in group discussion;

understand the purpose for keeping a journal and demonstrate ability to select and order study materials by presenting a journal for this subject;

develop a personal timetable taking into consideration study requirements and other commitments and recognise benefits of adhering to this;

describe an appropriate study space and appreciate the need for this;

examine and assess influence of study on ones lifestyle and determine own priorities;

list relevant human resources within the College;

identify principles of various forms of effective written communication;

identify principles of effective oral communications.

S.A. DEPARTMENT OF TECHNICAL AND FURTHER EDUCATION

SUBJECT SYLLABUS

SUBJECT TITLE:

Health, Nutrition and Caregiving Practices:- Infants

TIME: 49.5 hours
EFFECTIVE DATE: February, 1988
SUBJECT CODE: BTBR

AIM:

That students will gain knowledge and skills in health, nutrition and care giving practices required for working with neonates and children under eighteen months.

PRE-REQUISITE: All Foundation Studies

TERMINAL OBJECTIVES:

On successful completion of this subject the student should be able to:

describe the processes involved from conception, through pregnancy to birth;

describe factors that influence development during the ante-natal period;

outline the nutritional requirements of women during pregnancy and lactation;

describe, how to assess the needs of neonates, and the subsequent appropriate action;

describe the establishment and maintenance of successful breast feeding;

demonstrate the preparation of infant formulas using appropriate hygiene procedures;

describe how to establish and maintain successful bottle feeding;

describe daily care procedures of neonates;

describe factors which support the establishment and maintenance of parent-neonate relationships;

describe the more common illnesses of neonates and children up to 18 months; list and identify factors important to the healthy development of children up to eighteen months;

describe the nutritional requirements of children up to eighteen months and select and plan a varied and adequate food intake for them;

demonstrate practical skills in the preparation of meals suitable for children up to 18 months;

indicate how new foods and feeding techniques may be introduced to young children;

identify social, psychological and cultural influences on the formulation of food habits;

describe daily care procedures for children up to eighteen months including: hygiene practices, dressing, toileting, rest and sleep, teeth care and mealtime experiences;

describe ways in which children with special needs are catered for nutritionally and in routine procedures;

describe the care necessary for children up to eighteen months who are in ill health;

identify the need for and maintenance of routine daily records for children 0-18 months.

S.A. DEPARTMENT OF TECHNICAL AND FURTHER EDUCATION

SUBJECT SYLLABUS

SUBJECT TITLE:

Health, Nutrition and Caregiving Practices:- Toddlers

TIME: 22.5 hours
EFFECTIVE DATE: February, 1988
SUBJECT CODE: BTBW

AIM:

That students will gain knowledge and skills in health, nutrition and care giving practices required for working with children from eighteen months to three years.

PRE-REQUISITE:

All Foundation Studies

TERMINAL OBJECTIVES:

On successful completion of this subject the student should be able to:

list and discuss factors important to the healthy development of children from eighteen months to three years;

describe daily care procedures for children eighteen months to three years including: hygiene practices, dressing, toileting, rest and sleep, teeth care and mealtime experiences;

describe the nutritional requirements of children eighteen months to three years and select and plan a varied and adequate food intake for them;

demonstrate practical skills in serving a variety of meals and snacks;

identify the influences on food selection and eating patterns of children eighteen months to three years;

demonstrate practical skills in the planning, preparation and presentation of food experiences involving children 18 months to 3 years;

describe ways in which children with special needs are catered for nutritionally and in routine procedures;

describe the more common childhood illnesses of children eighteen months to 3 years;

describe the care necessary for children eighteen months to three years who are in ill health;

identify the need for and maintenance of routine daily records for children 18 months to three years.

S.A. DEPARTMENT OF TECHNICAL AND FURTHER EDUCATION

SUBJECT SYLLABUS

SUBJECT TITLE:

Health, Nutrition and Caregiving Practices:- Child 3-6 yrs

TIME: 45 hours
EFFECTIVE DATE: February, 1988
SUBJECT CODE: BTBZ

AIM:

That students will gain knowledge and skills in health, nutrition and care giving practices required for working with children from three to six years.

PRE-REQUISITE:

All Foundation Studies

TERMINAL OBJECTIVES:

On successful completion of this subject the student should be able to:

list and discuss factors important to the healthy development of children 3 to 6 years;

describe daily procedures for children 3-6 years including hygiene practices, dressing, toileting, rest and sleep, teeth care and mealtime experiences;

describe the nutritional requirements of children 3-6 years and select and plan a varied and adequate food intake for them;

identify the influences on the food selection and eating patterns of children 3 to 6 years;

demonstrate an understanding of the principles applied in food selection, handling, storage, preparation and cooking;

demonstrate practical skills in serving a variety of meals and snacks;

demonstrate practical skills in the planning, preparation, of presentation of food experiences involving children 3-6 years;

describe the ways in which children with special needs are catered for nutritionally and in routine procedures;

describe the more common childhood illnesses in children 3-6 years;

describe the care necessary for children 3-6 who are in ill health;

identify the need for and maintenance of routine daily records for children 3-6 years.

S.A. DEPARTMENT OF TECHNICAL AND FURTHER EDUCATION

SUBJECT SYLLABUS

SUBJECT TITLE:

Field Education:- Introduction

TIME: 9 hours tutorial
54 hours field
63 hours total

EFFECTIVE DATE: February, 1988

SUBJECT CODE: BTSA

AIMS:

That students will be introduced to practical experiences in various Children's Services, begin to develop skills in caregiving, and apply the knowledge and skills gained in other fields of study in a field situation.

RECOMMENDED CO-REQUISITE: All other Foundation studies

TERMINAL OBJECTIVES:

On successful completion of this subject the student should be able to:

apply knowledge of theoretical components of the course in a child care setting;

demonstrate competency in skills appropriate to the level of a beginning student including:

- maintenance of routine tasks
- establishing relationships with young children
- establishing relationships with staff and other adults
- basic observation techniques
- record keeping
- maintenance of appropriate care environment (human and physical)
- appropriate personal involvement in the child care situation
- complete appropriate field based assignments

S.A. DEPARTMENT OF TECHNICAL AND FURTHER EDUCATION

SUBJECT SYLLABUS

SUBJECT TITLE:

Field Education:- Infants

TIME: 18 hours tutorial
+180 hours field
198 hours total

EFFECTIVE DATE: February, 1988
SUBJECT CODE: BTSB

AIMS:

That students will gain practical experience in the field and apply knowledge and skills gained from related theoretical units of study to caregiving situations for children, neonate to eighteen months.

PRE-REQUISITE: All Foundation Studies

RECOMMENDED CO-REQUISITES:

Human Development and Caregiving Practices:- Infants
Caregiving Skills - Planning and Practice:- Infants
Health, Nutrition and Caregiving Practices:- Infants

TERMINAL OBJECTIVES:

On successful completion of this subject the student should be able to:

apply knowledge from the theoretical components of the course in a child care setting;

demonstrate competency in caring for children, neonate to eighteen months, including:
- maintenance of daily care procedures
- development and maintenance of effective relationships and interactions with children;
- development and maintenance of effective relationships with staff, parents and other adults;
- recognizing and responding to infant's feelings;
- maintenance and enhancement of developmentally appropriate care environments;
- planning and implementation of experiences based on observation of individual and group needs within the total programme;
- planning own ongoing interaction and involvement within total programme;
- maintenance of professional attitude as a student in child care setting

evaluation of own performance and outcomes of involvement in child care situation;

define and fulfil own role and areas of responsibility within the total programme;

demonstrate skills in caring for children reared within a range of practices that exist within our multicultural society;

demonstrate skills in understanding the special needs of individual children in the Centre programme;

demonstrate skills in understanding the importance of ensuring non-discriminatory practices while involved in the Centre programme.

S.A. DEPARTMENT OF TECHNICAL AND FURTHER EDUCATION

SUBJECT SYLLABUS

SUBJECT TITLE:

Field Education:- Toddler

TIME: 9 hours tutorial
90 hours field
99 hours total

EFFECTIVE DATE: February, 1988
SUBJECT CODE: BTSC

AIMS:

That students will gain practical experience in the field and apply knowledge and skills gained from related theoretical units of study to caregiving situations for children, eighteen months to three years.

PRE-REQUISITE: All Foundation Studies

RECOMMENDED CO-REQUISITES:

Human Development and Caregiving Practices:- Toddlers
Health, Nutrition and Caregiving Practices:- Toddlers
Caregiving Skills - Planning and Practice:- Toddlers

TERMINAL OBJECTIVES:

On successful completion of this subject the student should be able to:

apply knowledge from the theoretical components of the course in a child care setting;

demonstrate competency in caring for the toddler, including:
- maintenance of daily care procedures
- development and maintenance of effective relationships and interactions with children
- development and maintenance of effective relationships with staff, parents and other adults
- maintenance and enhancement of developmentally appropriate care environments
- planning and implementation of experiences based on observation of individual and group needs and interests within the total programme
- planning own ongoing interaction and involvement within total programme
- maintenance of professional attitude as a student in child care setting

demonstrate skills in planning, implementing and evaluating sequences of experiences to enhance toddlers awareness of themselves, others and their world;

provide appropriate guidance and control of individuals and small groups;

evaluate own performance and outcomes of involvement in child care situation;

define and fulfil own role and areas of responsibility within the total programme;

demonstrate skills in caring for children reared within a range of practices that exist within a multicultural society;

demonstrate skills in understanding the special needs of individual children while involved in the Centre programme;

demonstrate skills in understanding the importance of ensuring non-disciminatory practices while involved in the centre programme.

S.A. DEPARTMENT OF TECHNICAL AND FURTHER EDUCATION

SUBJECT SYLLABUS

SUBJECT TITLE:

Field Education:- Child 3 - 6 Years

TIME: 18 hours tutorial
+180 hours field
198 hours total

EFFECTIVE DATE: February, 1988

SUBJECT CODE: BTSD

AIMS:

That students will gain practical experience in the field and apply knowledge and skills gained from related theoretical units of study to caregiving situations for children, three to six years.

PRE-REQUISITE: All Foundation Studies

RECOMMENDED CO-REQUISITES:

Human Development and Caregiving Practices:- Child 3 - 6
Health, Nutrition and Caregiving Practices:- Child 3 - 6
Caregiving Skills - Planning and Practice:- Child 3 - 6

TERMINAL OBJECTIVES:

On successful completion of this subject the student should be able to:

apply knowledge from the theoretical components of the course in a child care setting;

demonstrate competency in caring for children, three to six years, including:
- maintenance of daily care procedures
- development and maintenance of effective relationships and interactions with children
- development and maintenance of effective relationships with staff, parents and other adults
- maintenance and enhancement of developmentally appropriatecare environments
- planning and implementation of experiences to develop skills and concepts
- strategies for developing social competence
- planning own ongoing interaction and involvement within total programme
- maintenance of professional attitude as a student in child care setting
- management of small and large groups

evaluate own performance and outcomes of involvement;

define and fulfil own role and areas of responsibility within the total programme;

demonstrate skills in caring for children reared within a range of practices that exist within a multicultural society;

demonstrate skills in understanding the special needs of individual children while involved in the Centre programme;

demonstrate skills in understanding the importance of ensuring non-discriminatory practices, while involved in the Centre programme;

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